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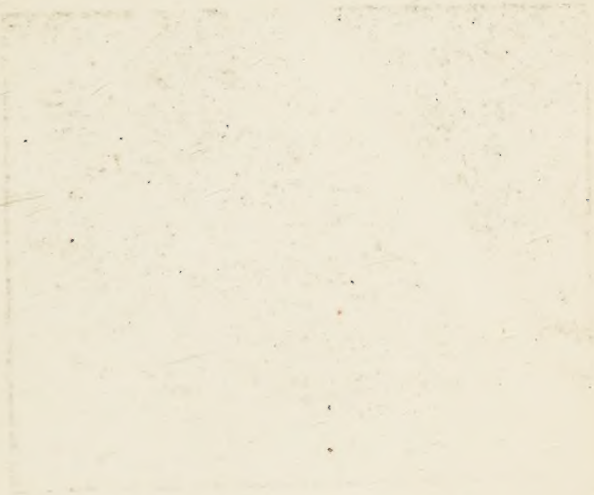

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MODERN EVANGELISTIC MOVEMENTS

Handbooks of Modern Evangelism

MODERN EVANGELISTIC MOVEMENTS

EDITED BY

TWO UNIVERSITY MEN

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PREFACE

THIS volume is the second of a short series of Handbooks of Modern Evangelism. These are designed to discuss present-day needs and problems in the light of the most competent scholarship and the widest practical experience. The introductory volume, *Evangelism in the Modern World*, has been before the public for four months and has met with a very encouraging reception. It has been welcomed with unusual interest by the Press, and has made its appeal to a large constituency.

The present work will be followed by others on *Winning the Children for Christ*, *The Modern Evangelistic Message*, *Modern Evangelistic Methods*, *The Psychology of Evangelism* and *The Ministry of Personal Dealing*. In planning the various volumes the Editors have sought to allow for the utmost catholicity of outlook and variety of expression consistent with the unity and scope of the subject. This book will be found to be in accordance with that principle. The various writers have been allowed the widest liberty in the treatment of their subjects, and the Editors accept no responsibility for individual views expressed.

To those who have lent the benefit of their advice and experience, and have rendered help in preparing this volume for the Press, we wish to express our indebtedness. In this connection we would like to name specially Dr A. Herbert Gray and Mr A. V. Smart, M.A.

THE EDITORS

GLASGOW
April 1924

Handbooks of Modern Evangelism

Uniform with this Volume

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This volume can be obtained in two styles :—
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INTRODUCTION

The Editors

Evangelism is the primary work of the Church in every age and in every land, and as such may fairly claim first place in the thought of its leaders and in the affection of its people. The Church of Jesus Christ is something more than a fellowship of enquiring minds or a communion of worshipping souls. It is something bigger and more fundamental than a nursery of Christian character or a repository of Christian truth. It is not merely a great educative agency and a vast social and philanthropic institution, dominated by lofty aims and impregnated with a generous Christian spirit. It is a fellowship of men and women united to Christ by a living faith, pledged to the realization of His ideals in individual and corporate life, and committed to the great enterprise of extending His Kingdom in the world. As such it is called to devote its attention and direct its energies to the vital work of winning men and women for the Master.

The evangelistic work of the Church has attracted some of the finest minds in every age, and successive generations of gifted men and women have given themselves with rare zeal and devotion to

the service of Christ in the redemption of their fellows. In all the annals of human history there are no pages more splendid or more inspiring than those which describe the emergence and growth of the great evangelistic movements which down the centuries have done so much to further the Redeemer's Kingdom. Such records constitute the permanent heritage of the Church militant. They provide her with a perennial inspiration and furnish a persistent challenge to her membership.

In every age Evangelism has set itself to attain certain definite goals, has launched its attack on specific evils, and directed its appeal to selected constituencies. Our own age is no exception to the rule, and few things are more characteristic of organized Christianity to-day than the varying forms Evangelism assumes in response to special needs and conditions, the different ideals it sets before itself, and the varied methods it employs to reach the widely different types and classes of people in the modern world.

While Evangelism is a definite branch of the work of the Church, and has special machinery maintained for its use by the various denominations, modern evangelistic movements are notable for the way in which they have broken through denominational barriers and overridden denominational prejudices. The constraint of Divine love and the growing urgency of human need have brought that discovery of underlying unity which mere ecclesiastical negotiations have conspicuously and persistently failed to evoke. The result has been

doubly beneficial. To the movements there has been given more adequate leadership and more generous support—a greater catholicity of outlook, a wider range of appeal, and a firmer basis on which to build. To the various Protestant Churches there has come a new sense of solidarity in the work of extending the Kingdom.

The great evangelistic movements of modern times have risen in response to definite and pressing needs, and have not infrequently been the outcome of the recognition of some neglected element in the Gospel, or some forgotten attribute of man's personality. They have been less the creation of new machinery for carrying out a programme than the embodiment of a living principle, or the expression of some dominant personality round whom ideals have gathered, in whom hopes have centred and from whom inspiration has radiated. In the initiation of fresh evangelistic enterprises as in the founding of new denominations personality has played no small part.

The study of such movements cannot fail of practical and spiritual suggestiveness if we approach them not primarily to criticize but to learn, determined not to be put off by what does not appeal to us, ready and even eager to be shaken out of the petrifying bondage of mere convention, anxious only to fit ourselves more fully for the service of Christ by an understanding of the ways in which His Spirit finds expression. Such study may be expected to impress us with a sense of the greatness of the field, to fill us with admiration for the way

in which the genius of great leaders has applied itself to tasks apparently impossible, and to inspire us with a new sense of spiritual possibilities as we survey the achievements of modern evangelistic enterprise. It may imprint on our minds in a way nothing else could do lessons alike of success and failure, and prove abundantly fruitful in suggesting similar enterprises upon which we ourselves might embark. It may suggest new and better methods capable of expansion and wider adaptation once their value has been demonstrated in practical work—methods which will remedy the defects of former activities and meet the expanding needs of contemporary life and service. It will at least give us a wider conception of evangelism than before, a deeper sense of the urgency of human need and the constraint of Divine Love, and a richer appreciation of the beauty and power of the gospel.

The task of selection has proved exceeding difficult, and the Editors are conscious of many notable omissions in this volume. It may be well to mention some of the principles that have guided them in their work. The movements chosen are all modern. They are functioning in the world of to-day. Their work is full of vitality and interest. They are evangelistic in the true meaning of the word, being, in every case, directed towards winning men and women (or boys and girls) for the fellowship and service of Christ, and the extension of His Kingdom. The term " modern " is taken here as implying contemporary activity

and continued success rather than as indicating the adoption of a particular attitude to doctrine or life, or the employment of special methods. The word *evangelistic* has been given as wide a connotation as possible, a connotation consistent with the scope and purpose of the volume and of the series of which it forms a part. The selection aims at being at once catholic and representative. It includes both denominational and interdenominational enterprises, movements directed towards the winning of all classes by the employment of varied methods, as well as movements limited to special constituencies (such as the S.C.M., the C.S.S.M., the Y.M.C.A., and the Brotherhood) or employing special methods (such as the R.T.S. and the Fellowship of the Kingdom). In a later volume the study of movern evangelistic methods will be developed in greater detail.

The task of arrangement has proved wellnigh as difficult as that of selection, but the Editors believe the material at their disposal has been used to the best advantage. The volume opens fittingly with the story of the Salvation Army, probably the most remarkable religious movement of the nineteenth century. The genius of its organization and the fervour of its spirit are here revealed by its present leader in a paper of singular freshness and power, and in the following chapter the adaptation of Army ideals and methods to the work of the Church is traced by Prebendary Carlile, the founder of the new movement. In the Settlement Movement we are introduced to a totally

different method of evangelistic approach, while in the story of the Brotherhood Movement post-war problems confront us and post-war methods begin to emerge. There is thus far a definite historical progression in our study.

The aftermath of war has been a period of singular evangelistic activity, the spirit of love and service finding expression along widely different lines. Two post-war movements come under review in this volume—the Industrial Christian Fellowship and the Fellowship of the Kingdom. Nothing is more remarkable than the utter dissimilarity of their outlook and methods, unless it be the consciousness that they embody essentially the same Christian ideal, manifest the same spirit of purposive service, and contemplate the same ultimate goal of a renewed humanity, living in real harmony with God and enjoying happy fellowship man with man.

Three of the four remaining chapters are devoted to movements operating in special fields; the C.S.S.M. among children, particularly those of the better classes; the Y.M.C.A. among lads and young men; and the S.C.M. among the rapidly growing student communities in our great modern centres of higher education. The last chapter reviews the work of a society whose distinctive function calls for attention in a book of this nature as likely to be of increasing importance in the coming generation. The chapters have, in every case, been written by secretaries or leaders of the movement in question.

It may occasion some surprise that men so intimately connected with the various movements should have been invited to engage in a critical study of their own work and asked to appraise its results and estimate its contribution to organized Christianity. Would sympathetic and discerning critics, it might be asked, labouring under no such handicap as office implies, not have proved more discerning in their judgment and more impartial in their verdict? This point was considered by the Editors, but, while conscious that the onlooker might conceivably be the best judge of the relative significance and value of a movement, they felt that he would suffer from one great limitation. The man who has lived through the growth of a movement, experienced the power of its ideals, known the inspiration of its fellowship, and discovered the joy of its service, is best able to kindle our imagination, and to inspire us to "go and do likewise." That, after all, is the aim of this volume.

We are not primarily concerned here, we repeat, with critical estimates, but are desirous of giving some idea of the magnitude, the variety, and the supreme importance of this field—the wonderful story of God's love and power revealed, and the issues raised for the future well-being of society. Our purpose will be achieved if in so doing we succeed in conveying something of the practical instruction, the encouragement and the inspiration that flow from it all, and the urgent call to personal service which it brings.

It remains to be added that each writer has been asked, as far as possible, to follow the same plan—to trace the origin of the movement he describes—to point out the specific needs it came into being to meet—to outline the methods it has been led to adopt—to note its progress and record its achievement—to indicate its present position and estimate its prospects—and, finally, to summarize the lessons learnt, lessons by which workers in other fields may profit.

This has been done to give cohesion and unity to the volume.

The Editors send out this book in the hope that it will lead to a fuller understanding of the greatest work of all, that it will create a deeper interest in the problems of Evangelism and that it will direct the attention of many to the various movements whose stories are told in these pages. It is their conviction that a study such as this will stimulate many to greater endeavour and will furnish workers in every field with food for thought and suggestions for service.

CHAPTER I

THE SALVATION ARMY

General Bramwell Booth [1]

The Salvation Army arose in mid-Victorian England. It was not the product of its age, except in the sense that it was a sharp reaction from the ideals of respectability and complacency which to an unusual degree governed English life at that period. The Army was anything but respectable. Its procedures shocked people. It was guilty of the crime of being in earnest. It offended all those polite conventions which, outwardly so nice, are often a cloak for cowardice, selfishness, and infidelity. The reception given to the Army during the first twenty years of its history is an index which should be useful to some future historian who wants to penetrate beneath the surface to the character of English society.

The period was one of great prosperity and industrial expansion. A substantial middle-class had asserted itself, and was marching on to great political and intellectual influence. Partly as a result of the growing wealth, but more as a result of invention, material comfort was increasingly

[1] In collaboration with a member of his staff.

possible and increasingly sought after. But behind all this appearance of well-being there was a condition of irreligion and degradation among the poorer classes such as few previous periods can have equalled. The "East End" came to mean at this time, not merely an area within a city, but a social condition which evoked loathing in many, philanthropic zeal in a few—a condition which some regarded with studied unconcern, and others with a kind of fascination. And it was in the East End—on Mile End Waste, London—that the Salvation flag was unfurled.

The picture which that part of London presented at the time is well described by a contemporary topographer. He says that the broad thoroughfare through Whitechapel, from Aldgate to Mile End, had on either side of it twenty narrow avenues leading to thousands of closely packed nests, full to overflowing of dirt, misery, and rags. It was while walking in this social abyss that William Booth, a man then under forty, who had been a Methodist minister—and, later, a roving evangelist—found his destiny. Then and there he offered up himself and his wife and children to the task of plucking the people from the edge of the pit.

By many religious people of the time the Salvation Army—then known as the Christian Mission—was looked at askance, and it was sometimes as roundly denounced in the churches as in any company of worldlings. The evangelistic pulse at this time had run down. The Church of England

was absorbed in controversies such as Tractarianism, far removed from the concerns of the man in the street, and still farther from those of the man in the gutter. The Nonconformist bodies were inclined to be self-satisfied if not self-sufficient. If periodically a sermon was addressed to sinners—even though no "sinners" in the sense intended were present—or if, once a year, a fortnight's revival campaign was instituted, they felt that the evangelical demands of their religion had been met. The idea that it was the prime business of the Church to save souls was all but lost amidst the complacencies of "Christian fellowship."

Whatever its critics may say on other counts, one virtue at least must be claimed for the Salvation Army—the virtue of acting in strict obedience to logic. People may condemn it as emotional and wayward, but really if its methods are examined candidly they will be found to afford a remarkable exhibition of logic in religion. Its conclusions are the inevitable results of its premises. The doctrinal standards of the Army are in general those of evangelical Christianity, and it is those doctrinal standards which have dictated its methods. It believes that all men have sinned, that all are called to repent, that all who do truly repent and accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour are pardoned and have the assurance of adoption into the family of God, and that they may be made strong to prevail against sin, even against the very sin that has hitherto laid them low. It believes also that Christ is coming again to judge the world,

and that heaven and hell are not vague abstractions of the mind, but tremendous realities.

Now, if these doctrinal standards are accepted, as they are by the great majority of professing Christians, it is difficult to see what alternative there is to a militant and aggressive evangelism. If we believe that the issues presented to the soul in this life are so momentous, what else can we do but bring the gospel of salvation as persuasively, as simply, as startlingly, as persistently as we can before the minds and consciences and hearts of men? Are we not justified in crying out to them, plucking them by the sleeve, stopping them in the way? Can any time be ill-chosen, any place unsuitable, any words extravagant in such a situation? If the Churches had professed a Universalist theology their condemnation of William Booth or their indifference to him, while themselves making no marked effort to the same end, might have been intelligible. But their theology was his, and his was theirs, and all that the Founder of the Salvation Army did, and all that the Army has done after him, is to assume that the creeds of the Church are true and to act as normal beings with ordinary human compassions might be expected to act in the light of their truth. To accept the Christian doctrine with its tremendous implications with regard to human destiny, and to remain unconcerned while souls are perishing because the Gospel has never been brought home to them, is surely a greater sin than to reject the Christian doctrine altogether. In the memorable

words of one great bishop, Lightfoot of Durham, the Salvation Army recalled the Church "to the lost ideal of the work of the Church—the universal compulsion of the souls of men."

We must hark back to William Booth, but in so doing we are not recounting the past history of the Army, we are envisaging its present and future. To the Army its Founder is not dead. His sword still flashes all through the world at the head of the hosts he was the means of raising up, which have been steadily increasing since he passed on. William Booth was a man of considerable natural gifts, though it is problematical—as it is also in the case of John Wesley—how far, had he been an unconsecrated man, those gifts would have carried him. Possibly he would have achieved no more than a local reputation. William Booth's consecration not only directed but amplified his gifts. It made him what he was. His consecration was not of a kind which was satisfied with the cultivation of private saintship, although he laid stress—no man more so—upon the need for holiness. But he had a wide-embracing missionary and evangelistic fervour which no criticism could hinder, no rebuffs diminish and no hatred quench. He was a man with boundless love for his fellows and of boundless ambition for the world. He sought out the worst and most hopeless. He plunged into the underworld in quest of those whom others shunned or of whom they despaired. He would, of course, declare—it was an intense conviction with him—that the high-in-the-instep

must make the same abasement as the down-at-the-heel, that "my lady" needed the same salvation as the Jezebel of the slums, and indeed he was an inconvenient figure in polite society because of the way in which he would thrust personal religion to the front. But he knew his own genius and the genius of the thing which, under God, he had created. He saw that such methods as the Salvation Army employed might be used—perhaps *only* such methods—to reach the lowest in the social scale, if the lowest were to be reached at all.

Little wonder that to the Army, vividly conscious of the eternal issues it had to proclaim, and of the hardness of those whom it set out to reach, the saving of men presented itself as the exercise of almost a physical constraint. William Booth had been fighting evil at close quarters. To him the existence of hell was not merely an article in a creed, he saw its open mouth every day, its very flames scorched him! He saw men and women falling over the fearful precipice, which was camouflaged with many specious devices. It was as incumbent upon him to effect the rescue of the people who were in danger of damnation as it would have been to hustle the inmates out of a burning house. And just as, in such an emergency, a neighbour would use any rope or ladder that might be handy, without caring a jot whether it bore the official seal of the fire brigade, so he chose the nearest and likeliest instruments that these might be the means of saving some. He

adopted sensational methods deliberately because it passed his wit to discover how these people could be aroused, how an epidermis thickened by vicious habit or profane environment could be pierced in any other way.

That is why, to the jeers of the tap-room and the scandal of the conventicle, the Army marched forth into the streets with drum and concertina. It is a sad misreading of the Army to suppose that its instruments or any of its methods are sacred as the altar-cloth in a ritualistic religion, or that, as an army chaplain said during the Great War, "It's the concertina that does it." The Army would have chosen anything which was likely to compel men's attention. Its methods have the sanction of expediency, and they have been blessed by God in many a field all over the world. Its Founder was well aware of the remark of the American revivalist, C. G. Finney, whose "anxious bench" was the forerunner of his own penitent form, that revival is the result of the right use of appropriate means. But as to what means are appropriate who shall judge? The Army found again and again a wonderful awakening of the human soul taking place as the result of the use of the strangest and most uncouth instruments. We have spoken of the methods as having been chosen, but really there was very little deliberate choice in the matter. The methods were always secondary to the spirit of enthusiasm and love which prompted any method whereby that spirit might express itself. As Catherine Booth, the

Army Mother, said long ago, the exuberance, the noise, the laughter of a Salvation gathering is not a putting on but a letting out.

To the pioneers of the Army it must have seemed unlikely that it would ever become a national force, still more unlikely that it would become an *international* force. To-day it preaches salvation in close upon eighty countries and in fifty tongues. And it is the same Army, with the same uncompromising evangel, in India or Japan as in England. Such an extension, however, might have been predicted from the first, and there are indications that William Booth and those immediately associated with him, saw it afar off. Such tremendous convictions as those which moved that little group must have a progenitive value. They must go on repeating themselves and working themselves out in action from within that unseen realm of ideas which knows no boundaries and no ageing. The vitality which attends Army progress on, say, the Gold Coast of West Africa or in the heart of Java is directly traceable to that original dynamic. What the Army can do at home with the dipsomaniac or the man released from Broadmoor it can do with the man who has been under the spell of the witch-doctor in Africa, or the criminal outcast of India. The stories, well-nigh incredible, of lives changed under Army influence, of broken earthenware mended, have come from the camp fires of Mashonaland as well as from English market-places. The devil has been vanquished in the heathen orgies of Nigeria

as well as in the drink dens of a London slum. Must there not be something of God in a movement which has adjusted itself so remarkably to London and Paris and New York, to Europe from Iceland to Italy, to the mine compounds of Johannesburg and the prisons of Ceylon, to the prairies of Canada and the rice-fields of Japan, and has worked the same kind of miracles in them all ?

But there is something else which ensured progress. We have laid hold of the idea of winning individuals one by one and then taking advantage immediately of their poignant experience of the new life to turn them into winners of others. We are ashamed of the modern reticence about religion! We regard it as shameful if not actually traitorous. To confess Christ is the first necessity laid upon the new convert. It is vital to the preservation of this new Thing which has been born within him, and it is of vast help to his fellows who have still to make the decision. Silence with regard to one's religious convictions is not only discouraging but weakening. The new life is steadied by expression, let that expression be ever so crude.

This method of insisting upon immediate witness-bearing has proved surprisingly effective. From the beginning it was found that people whose lives had been changed, people whose previous record was known, and who now came before their fellows a living demonstration of the great change, were listened to when the most eloquent pleading on the part of strangers would have fallen on deaf ears. The words of these people may often have

offended those of delicate spiritual susceptibilities, their faculty for words being evidently far behind their spiritual experience. They could harp only on one note—but it was a wonderfully effective one—that whereas they were blind, now they saw. Yet such a simple declaration proved everywhere far more effective than volumes of oratory. Those who listened came under the spell not of the words but of the Thing.

The Salvation Army has used such men, some of them very odd characters, but as evidently the subjects of miracle as anything in the Acts of the Apostles, to further its advance. The names of many of them represent a holy tradition in the Army to this day, and although quite humble people, with few intellectual gifts, they inspired some of its great departures. It was the same with the Army centres. Many of the early ones had been low drinking and gambling saloons. To see them converted to this new use was better than any number of finished sermons. It was the same with the songs. To wrest some music-hall tune out of the very throat of the devil and give it a spiritual meaning was something the very audacity of which "caught on." This was not fighting at long range or in carefully dug trenches, it was real hand-to-hand warfare. And this was, in essence, the Salvation Army. The military titles, uniform, and equipment came later. These only completed the original conception. The Army was there long before it got the name.

It is necessary here to say a word about our

social work. To many people this work has suggested that the Army has left its original formation. They have said that although they could not agree with all its religious manifestations, its social methods were undoubtedly good. They rather commended these methods as an instance of the Army's better mind. The truth is that the Army has not in the least shifted its foundation. It is out to save men from the wrath to come, whose lurid flames are seen also in this present life. The social work, vast and varied as it is, is not to be considered as a new departure. It is neither secondary nor primary. It is all one with the Army's original task. The Founder of the Army saw quite early in his experience that with many souls whom it was desired to win, there were handicapping material circumstances which made it difficult if not impossible for these men to accept the Gospel. He set himself to clear away these hindrances—that was all. The social work of the Army, from the provision of free breakfasts, or prison-gate help, to the settlement of people in the Overseas Dominions, has the sole purpose of making straight the path for the work of salvation. It is done in order to give God a chance with the human soul.

It had been intended in this article to relate some stories of the transformed lives which have resulted from Army effort in all parts of the world, but the most leisured writer might quail at the task of selection. They are not to be told as tit-bits, each of them being a great human

story. Better, perhaps, attempt to tell none. The Army started out in the faith that not the most degraded and unlovely soul was beyond the reach of salvation, that those who were apparently the most desperate would respond to the refining work of the Holy Ghost. It would have held fast to that faith and would have continued to labour in the strength of it even if there had been no results to prove it. But the results are written in the every-day experience of the Army. The changes are not merely that so-and-so has begun to lead a better life. They are dramatic changes, changes that to the sceptical must seem like sheer romance. The habitual criminal has turned from his crime to an honesty which is almost pathetically delicate and beautiful, the drunkard has lost his desire for alcohol, the wife-beater has become the loving husband, the lascivious has become clean, the despairing has been rescued from the very verge of suicide and has come to radiate a wonderful happiness. In the ears of many a man, hopelessly besotted as it seemed, there has sounded a trumpet, and the eyes that have been bleared have seen the mists dissolved from "around the hid battlements of eternity."

It must not be gathered from what has been written that it is only the outwardly profligate who are converted in the Army. True, it is those cases which catch the eye. There is a triumph in such conversions which may not seem to belong to those of people who have always been living decent and moral lives. But among these decent people

the Army has its many trophies too. Is it not likely that they, in spite of their outward blamelessness, may have their interior conflicts just as much as the notorious wrongdoers who have been saved as brands from the burning? There is more reticence about them, but not less reality. The man who has never transgressed socially, and has done his duty as far as human laws require it, he too is brought face to face with eternal issues, and learns at some point or other how poor a thing is his respectability in the sight of God, and how foolish would be any assumption of superior virtue on his part over the man who is a publican and a sinner.

It is not only the drunkard and the wife-beater who are the subjects of the Army's reclaiming work. Perhaps even, in the unseen records, the cases of these people may not be the most miraculous. The Army has got hold of the decent people too—people who might not be thought to be far from the Kingdom, but are in truth farther, on account of their very respectability, than those convicted of gross sin. These decent people have been converted under its influence and have had their lives directed into new channels of love to God and service to others. The Army has been extended not a little through the consecration of such men and women as these. It may well be that among all sorts and conditions of men—including those who are outwardly respectable—there are dissatisfactions and misgivings and self-disgusts for which the Salvation Army has a

remedy. The remedy lies in its simple realistic presentation of divine truth, its insistence upon the saving value of definite decision, and the witness it can offer of those who have passed from darkness into light and know the joy and goodness of the new life.

To speak of the resolution of interior conflicts is to use a psychological phrase. More simply it may be said that the Salvation Army has been the means of bringing all kinds of men to the necessity of decision. The decision has been, not merely to sign a temperance pledge or to cease an evil practice, but the deep, fundamental decision to turn to God, to accept the salvation proffered through His Son, and to open the soul for the regenerating work of the Holy Ghost. This is the issue for every man and woman, whatever their social standing or moral record. The Army knows no exceptions. It knows of no other gate into the Kingdom. If it plays upon the emotions to secure a frame of mind necessary to reach a decision it never allows the moment of decision to be slurred over by an emotional experience. This must be as definite and individual for every person as his birth or his death.

Enough has been said to show how intensive the work of the Salvation Army is; it remains only to hint at its extensiveness. The Army is operating in seventy-nine countries and colonies, and has between 13,000 and 14,000 centres of evangelistic work, and 1400 institutions for the care of the friendless and wayward. In the

British Isles the centres number some 1500; in Australia and New Zealand, nearly 1900; and Canada between 600 and 700; in the United States more than 1500. India, the oldest mission field of the Army, has, with Ceylon, nearly 5000 such centres. The Far East has 450. The work of the Army is proceeding in eleven countries on the mainland of Europe. The numbers of officers and cadets in the field work alone all over the world, without counting the thousands more engaged in social work, is 17,000. These men and women are facing everywhere the same problems, for human nature has the same kind of guilt, the same need, and the same hope, whatever the colour of the skin. And the message of God's love has the same quickening power, whatever the language in which it is spoken to mankind. The dwellers in these many lands, like those who gathered on the day of Pentecost, hear in their own tongues the wonderful works of God.

And the word of Peter has often to be uttered again: "These men are not drunken, as ye suppose."

CHAPTER II

THE CHURCH ARMY

Rev. Prebendary Wilson Carlile, D.D.

In the early eighties the sound apostolic idea of using keen working men and working women to win their fellows was, unfortunately, thought to be somewhat revolutionary inside the Church of England. In my view, the problem of indifference was even greater then than it is now; and yet, inside the Church, any enthusiasm or really aggressive effort was speedily crushed by excessive respectability.

As one who had reached the Church of England ministry after conversion from Agnosticism, the problem of the "outsider" was a very interesting one to me, and more especially so as I was curate of the particularly respectable Church of St Mary Abbots, Kensington. It was a strange turn of fortune—I ought not to use that word—that gave me as junior curate and the greatest "outsider" on the clergy staff, the duty of preaching to the smallest of evening congregations in the Mission Church. Yet the fact that the Church Army, in whose "unrespectability" we all now glory, was born in that most respectable parish, is surely proof

that the heart of the Church of England was then, and is now, absolutely sound.

Like several other clergymen of that day—the late Rev. F. S. Webster and the Rev. Evan Hopkins among others—I found that whereas sermons in Church attracted tens, informal methods in the schoolroom, or better still, live open-air meetings attracted thousands. So successful were we in the open air, that my vicar stopped the meetings for a time, acting on the urgent advice of the police. But we had gone too far to turn back. Several of the very worst characters had been influenced. The "outsiders" thus won shared with me the great difficulty—a longing to win other definite "outsiders" and an unfortunate lack of opportunity for aggressive work within the Church organization. Such opportunity was essential if we converts were to save our souls alive; an alternative was a drift into undenominationalism. This, in brief, was the origin of the Church Army—a mission to win the outsider, conducted largely by outsiders who had themselves been won.

The hottest centre of the Skeleton Army then rampant with its black flag and skull and crossbones, was at that time in Westminster; we planted the Church Army flag there. We "held the fort" in spite of all forms of opposition, which did not exclude active personal violence. But the opposition aroused the Church to support us, and strengthened the spirit of our workers. We aimed to combine dash and push with humility and

modesty, zeal with order. Conversion, Consecration, and Churchmanship was and is our basis.

Undoubtedly the great feature of our work was the personal testimony of our converts. Nothing seemed more to increase the violence of our opponents than the complete reformation of some of the most notorious characters. Most of our workers suffered severely by personal attack. On two occasions I was treated so violently that rest for six months was necessary. But this violence was a rest test and also a real blessing in disguise. It proved to our fellow churchmen that we were right up against the Evil One ; and steady support from the Church brought us through the worst fights with the drink and lust of the day. Bishop Lightfoot was a particularly keen supporter, saying, on one occasion, that the sweetest sound he had ever heard in all his ministry was the sound of the clogs of Church Army workers on the stone floors of many of the Parish Churches where Church Army people were working.

While I begin with this testimony to the efficacy of the method of personal witness, and while I shall undoubtedly end on it, I would mention several other effective methods we used. The magic lantern—" eyegate "—was more or less unknown in church organization then ; but it was, and even now still is, invaluable, not only to attract, but to hold, to teach and to win.

Open-air effort by Church of England workers was practically unknown in our early days. That method needs no apology now, universally used

as it is to-day. Brass and other bands have been a prominent feature of Church Army work from the first; and they are an irresistible attraction both at outdoor and indoor meetings.

The personal testimony of converts, the open-air meeting and the teaching by "eye-gate" were therefore our main planks. But from the very first we maintained the necessity of suitable training for all those who volunteered to give their entire lives to the service of God in the Church Army. The first training home was opened in Oxford under the wardenship of the late Rev. F. S. Webster. Training has always been on very practical lines, though we also insist on a three to four months' intensive course in Bible, Prayer-Book, and in Church History. Part of the training has always been in the field, actually at work under fully trained men or women. All our men candidates are taught something about brass instruments and their use in mission work.

Almost from the first we offered equal opportunities both to women and men. While the idea of working men evangelists was revolutionary, the idea of women sharing even in very small part in the work of the Church was more revolutionary still. But to-day we have 500 trained women in our ranks working as sisters in slums, in homes, and in the streets at night. All receive a certificate from the Bishop of London admitting them to the office of Mission Sister in his Diocese, and these certificates are often endorsed by the Bishops in whose Dioceses the sisters work.

While the open-air meetings and other aggressive efforts under the trained officers and mission sisters gave an outlet for the aggressive zeal of workers and converts, the spiritual life of the various Corps was maintained by early morning prayer meetings at the back of the churches before Holy Communion, and by the weekly holiness meetings. The proper combination of aggressive work with adequate spiritual feeding of the workers proved then, and proves still, to be the highway to real revival.

But no review of the early days of the Church Army would be complete without reference to the growth of our social Evangelistic work. Such reference will, I hope, not be considered inappropriate in a handbook on Modern Evangelism. Social work is a proper part of Evangelism; and a very important part too.

We were, and are still, out to win the most degraded back to Christ and it was inevitable that, sooner or later, we should encounter the problem of the destitute, the unemployed, the "down and out." Had our Evangelism any message for them? Undoubtedly; but especially with our constituency of the very poorest, there was always the very present danger of professions of "conversion" for the sake of food and shelter. We there and then adopted the principle of work-aid and, in our Labour Homes, thousands have been helped back to decent citizenship by means of their own hard work.

We undertook the task primarily for the sake

of the evangelistic opportunity. Thousands have been won by the preaching of our Church Army Evangelists, but thousands have also been won by our social Evangelists, who have daily practised the Gospel in the face of a miscellaneous collection of social wreckage. It has proved an important phase of Evangelism on which I shall have to touch again later.

While in ordinary parish work and in these labour homes, the ministry of our working-men Evangelists and Sisters has been much blessed, the value of their efforts has been realized in many other ways. The Prison Commissioners value the assistance of our men and women in dealing with those who have fallen into the hands of the law; in workhouses also and in reformatories our workers are welcomed. The Home Office constantly testifies to the value of the religious element in dealing with all kinds of temperaments and with all kinds of social problems. We take girls and lads from the police courts; criminally-assaulted little girls are also placed in our care; and all simply because the Evangelism of our workers is valued as a remedial agency by the authorities. There are many other phases of special endeavour which cannot here be referred to.

We are strongly represented also in the Police Courts, though in this phase of work we are not the leading Church society. Nevertheless, it is a fact that the majority of police court missionaries now at work have received their training in the Church Army on our very practical lines before

they took up their police court duties in other societies.

Other Church Army Evangelistic developments have been made besides the work in crowded slum parishes and in these social evangelistic efforts. In the country villages and hamlets the fresh voices of Church Army men and women have done much to help the country clergy whose task is, in many ways, even more difficult than that of their brethren in the town. We have over fifty horse-drawn mission vans at work in the country districts; and a growing fleet of motor mission vans follows the crowds into the market-places and to the fairs and race-courses. But these motors are an after-war feature.

On lines such as these our work was built up until the process was rudely interrupted by the Great War. We were sorely hit in this ordinary work, and it took us two or three years in some departments to regain the ground temporarily given up owing to lack of workers.

During the war we had two thousand recreation centres on the various fighting fronts, and the efforts made won the hearty goodwill of our gallant soldiers. This war work has stood us in good stead in securing a hearing in our post-war efforts. The work was, of course, principally undertaken for the sake of its evangelistic opportunity.

This war work has left us a legacy of similar opportunity in some fifty districts at home, where we are now running social centres on exactly

similar lines to the war-time huts and tents. They are, however, run with greater opportunity for evangelistic work, through the social endeavour, than was possible in the turmoil of the war period.

This, in very brief outline, completes the story of the origin of the Church Army, its methods, its progress and its present position. What of the lessons? We have now lived as a Society for forty-two years and have naturally learned much. I propose to deal with our lessons under three main heads.

The first is the need for, and the opportunity of, definite evangelistic work through the medium of social clubs on the lines of our war-time huts and our after-war social centres. It is especially true with young people, that too direct an approach to religious subjects is apt to frighten or repel. No district should be without its social club, with a capable and always-present superintendent. Work of this kind has many advantages for those principally interested in men and especially in young men. Clergymen or ministers visiting from house to house come principally into touch with the women; but in a social club, run on attractive lines, will always be found a number of men and youths. When the superintendent has won their confidence many will be led to confide in him their doubts, troubles and anxieties, and he will have ample opportunities for individual dealing and heart-to-heart talks on things that really matter. The religious element must be unobtrusive, but every evening should be closed with brief family

prayers. There should always also be a Club Bible Class and, if suitable premises are available, the club itself should be the centre for a mission service on Sunday evening, after the usual church hours. In these days of increased leisure, social effort on these lines is essential.

I shall touch more grave and more difficult questions in dealing with the next point. No one will deny that the churches are taking more and more interest in the economic aspects of the Christian faith. All will admit that this keen and this growing interest is, of itself, good and necessary. We all want more Christian dealing between Capital and Labour, between nation and nation, between man and man. We workers in the Church Army, more perhaps than most, can see the beneficent results of much of the legislation of the last twenty or thirty years which we believe Christianity has inspired. We are second to none in desiring more opportunities for all—more Christian distribution of the means of life. But there is a great and increasing danger that the attention of earnest Christian workers should be turned away from the age-long evils of personal sin in thinking too much and too frequently about the evils of the modern economic systems. We Church Army people see facts from a different angle than do many others. Our work brings us daily into touch with those who, in spite of education, in spite of unlimited opportunities, in short, in spite of all those things for which the Christian economist presses, have fallen to the

very lowest. We struggle daily to lift them up and are saddened because the task is so difficult. Drink, lust, gambling, spite, lack of character, are man's worst enemies ; and workers in the wide field of Evangelism will do well to remember the fact when tempted to rely solely on these modern economic theories.

We are brought back to the point from which we started—the need of aggressive personal evangelism. To stir the indifference of the masses we still need drastic measures. In the Church Army we constantly try to improve and sharpen the methods which have stood us in good stead for so many years.

Since the war we have adopted the practice of using a band of Evangelists and Sisters, whereas in the pre-war period one man or woman would be employed more or less alone. In some cases the men and women march throughout the country, in all weathers, sleeping where they find themselves. Their willingness to " rough it " is an irresistible attraction. Although this form of effort may not be possible for all workers in Evangelism, the importance of showing a willingness to " rough it " must not be overlooked even in ordinary church life. The spirit of self-sacrifice is demanded in all who would win their fellows ; there are plenty of opportunities for self-denial for Christian workers around any church or chapel.

More lately we have employed small groups of Evangelists who work for a limited time in one area. Local workers might, in similar fashion,

unite for an effort on special lines for a special period and, when that has expired, adopt some other line for a further span. We have, in the past year, given hospitality to some hundreds of Christian workers in our Training Homes in London for a week-end during which they have had opportunity of seeing Church Army men at work, and opportunities also of taking part in actual aggressive work. In numbers of cases these " week-enders " have returned to their home parishes fitted to lead such a band of workers as is here suggested.

The lantern, even in these days, still does much to attract people to services, and no one will deny the value of teaching by the eye. The cinematograph will become of more and more importance in church work.

Since the war we have taken a number of cinema houses for Sunday evenings and, after the ordinary church service, have held popular services for the masses. I suppose it is not easily possible to explain why people, untouched by ordinary church work, can be persuaded to attend a religious meeting in a secular building whereas it would be next door to impossible to get them to attend a service in church. But it is undoubtedly a fact that, with a little push and energy, a cinema house can be filled on Sunday nights even if no pictures are shown. I should like to suggest that evangelistic workers throughout the whole country should take over the cinema houses for Sunday evening services after church hours. More and more of

these houses are, in spite of all Church and other opposition, being opened on Sundays for purely secular purposes. It might easily pay the Church to try a " flank " movement and offer to take over the larger cinema houses for Evangelistic Meetings for Sunday evenings for an agreed period. It is easily possible that the cinema trade would welcome the proposition, for the trade workers are undoubtedly keen to have the day as a day of rest. It is food for thought when one reads in the cinema traders' publications that the opposition to Sunday opening of cinema houses comes equally from the Church *and the publicans.*

In the summer months, the energies of evangelistic workers should be concentrated even more than at present on open-air work. The type of meeting we have found most successful is that which evolves the personal witness of the workers themselves. Theological sermons are not required, and if attempted speedily bore and disperse the crowd.

The people are now more on the look out than ever for live religion as lived and expounded by live men and women ; the public are tired of exploded fads and " isms," but they will listen by the hour to up-to-date witness of God's present pardon and power to keep.

If there is one fact of which I am absolutely sure, it is that the common people, though they do not attend church, are not anti-religious. Is not this fact the greatest call of our time for more effort, both indoors and outdoors, for our Master ?

CHAPTER III

THE SETTLEMENT MOVEMENT

Rev. J. Harry Miller, D.D.

When the river of life flows swiftly it often overflows its banks and forms new channels for itself. In the latter half of the nineteenth century there came such a rising flood of intellectual and social life. The current of Idealism was strong; it was especially felt amongst University men who had learned from such teachers as Ruskin and Carlyle, and had experienced the friendship of Denison, and Toynbee, and T. H. Green. They felt the irresistible impulse to action, and Arnold Toynbee's example and enthusiasm especially were contagious. His life was short—he was born in 1852 and died in 1883—but it left so deep an imprint on his comrades that the first attempt to express his spirit in social work was named after him, and Toynbee Hall became the incarnation of his ideals.

Contemporaneous with this social and intellectual movement there came a flood tide of religious life. Arnold Toynbee himself was a deeply religious man. In 1875 he wrote in a letter to a friend, "To Love God—do you know these words gather amazing force about them as life gets more diffi-

cult, mysterious, and unfathomable. One's soul in its loneliness at last finds religion the only clue."

A religious life so deep as this cannot be content with mere formal utterance. It demands reality, freedom, and originality in its expression, and Toynbee, urged in the direction of service, consulted the Rev. S. A. Barnett, Vicar of St Jude's, Whitechapel, as to the best line of action. Through this friend (who became afterwards Canon Barnett) the ideas of Arnold Toynbee were clothed in the form in which now they are best known, and Barnett became the first Warden of Toynbee Hall.

It seems true, therefore, to reckon the whole Settlement Movement one of the manifold forms in which the Spirit of Christ moves out to meet the needs of men. There had been College "Missions" previously, but not until 1884 was the resolution formally taken at a meeting in Oxford to "found and support a University Settlement in East London, and to offer the management of it to Mr Barnett." [1]

"At Cambridge also interest became keen. After one or two preparatory conferences summoned by the 'Committee for the Study of Social Questions,' a large meeting was held in the Guildhall in May 1884, in which the resolution was passed that this meeting of members of the University of Cambridge desired to work with the members of the University of Oxford who wished to found a University Settlement in East

[1] *Toynbee Hall and the English Settlements*," p. 28, by Dr Werner Picht. Bell & Sons, 1914.

London. A committee was appointed which was to secure pecuniary and personal support to the 'Universities' Settlement Association' founded in Oxford, and, further, representatives of Cambridge were selected for the London Committee of this Association.

"Work was begun without delay. £4000 had to be raised immediately by subscription, later another £7000. By the autumn they had got so far that the University Extension Lectures, which hitherto had found a scanty accommodation in Canon Barnett's schoolrooms, could now be held in the new Hall. On Christmas Eve, 1884, the first Residents slept in the new Settlement, and at the beginning of 1885 it was completely finished.

"The name 'Toynbee Hall' goes back to a suggestion of Mrs Barnett. On March 9th, 1884, the first anniversary of Toynbee's death, a memorial service was held in the Chapel of Balliol College; Barnett preached. Under the influence at once of the spiritual continuance of their friend and the pending negotiations for the foundation of the Settlement, the idea came to Mrs Barnett to call it Toynbee Hall, as the most eloquent expression of the hope of its founders that in this place a living intercourse would be established between working men and representatives of intellectual culture. The proposition was approved by the committee, and thus the 'Mother of Settlements' received her name."[1]

In Dr Werner Picht's book, just quoted, a

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 28.

history of the movement has been clearly traced, and the purpose of this chapter is not to traverse again the ground which he has covered, but rather to consider the Settlement Movement under one special aspect—namely, as a method of evangelism which has been used by the Christian Church. Many of the Settlements which were founded in the later years of the nineteenth century were definitely linked to the Christian Church; of 39 Settlements recorded by Dr Picht, 29 have a definitely religious basis and 10 have not. It is, therefore, probably a just claim to make that the Settlement has been used as one of many instruments for the realization of the Kingdom of God upon earth, and it is from this general point of view that we here approach the subject.

"It is the most elementary expression of human feeling in revolt against human misery. . . . Its guiding star was the feeling of its pioneers that a sacrifice of love was necessary in order to make up to their brothers who lay in economic serfdom for the centuries of forgotten duty on the part of those who held in their hands culture and power." [1] The heart of this is clearly Christian. In a day when the fulness of life was felt it offered an experiment by which that fulness might be imparted to those who had been deprived of much that makes life lovely and noble. Further, it suggested that, by partly sharing the conditions which make life grey and chill, a real evidence of identifying themselves with the life of the people

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 126.

might be given. It is open to question how far any Settlement has attained this goal; whether an isolated institution planted in a densely populated district can ever reach and actually share in the life of the people of that district. But one thing is clear, a Settlement not only brings its Residents into touch with the people of the district, but it offers an open door of access for those people to the Residents. Much mission and propaganda work is on one side only: the method of the Settlement is reciprocal. It not only offers the friendship of the more fortunate to the less fortunate, but it opens the doors of the fortunate to their brothers and sisters near at hand.

It is worth noting that when the religious revival of the "seventies" turned the thoughts of men to God, their next concern was with the disinherited children of God. A conscience void of offence towards God must clear itself of offence towards men also. It was not enough to *preach* the Gospel, it must be *lived* within sight of the people. Religion is life more than Doctrine; its expression demands something broader than mere words, and we therefore turn to consider the Settlement Movement as the expression of the Spirit of Jesus Christ along a line especially congenial to the heart and mind of youth.

I. The Spirit of Christ demands a *natural* and *unconventional* expression. There is something attractive to young and eager minds in the unconventionality of the Settlement Movement. To many a man the weakness of much religious work

is that it touches life too narrowly—at one or two points, not at every point. It gathers men and women in groups and meetings, and appeals often to what is known in the jargon of modern psychology as "the herd instinct." The more intimate one's knowledge of human nature becomes, the deeper is the impression that this is inadequate. Fifty years ago some eager young men grew restless under this impression: they were less moved by "a fidgety desire to give edification" than by a keen longing to learn the actual facts and conditions of life in the cities. They believed that the Spirit of Christ should touch life at every point; that to live a life was more necessary than to talk about it; that to share conditions was more Christlike in their eyes than to dip into them and fly away. To give to those in need demanded that a way be opened up for a return visit of them to their friends, and this truth determined the choice of the Settlement as a method of work for God. If a trust of learning, or art, or music, or money, had been yielded to a man, he had no right selfishly to appropriate it to private ends. Freely he had received, freely he must give.

"The disciple of Jesus, the Franciscan, every one who daily offers his life as a sacrifice for humanity, whose self is effaced, who is only a tool in the service of a higher power, has a freedom of action in regard to other men, a right to enter into their life, which no other possesses. And the poor are peculiarly sensitive to this. To the soldier of

the Salvation Army, to the deaconess, even to the representatives of a Church, though they do not belong to it, their door stands open. They may not be glad of the visit, but they do not regard it as impertinence. And out of tolerance friendship may develop. But with regard to every other, especially in the case of the best workmen—the workman with a feeling of honour—his house is his castle, his friendship and his confidence a treasure which he is not ready to give to every one who takes it into his head to be interested in him." [1]

The unconventionality of this method was one of its great attractions. Its novelty was of less importance than its reality; condescension was ruled out, and comradeship took its place. Where a deep religious spirit found clothing in the Settlement idea, compassion—peculiarly Christian word in its deepest significance—awoke and became active.

II. The Spirit of Christ impels to *diagnosis*. As time passed the value of the Settlement way of working revealed itself in one important truth. The disease of human society had spread widely, and pierced deep. If a real cure was to be found for it the physician must study, consider, and diagnose each case, not by spasmodic interest, but by a patient investigation of facts, a continuous and wakeful experience of the conditions, and an appreciation of the temptations and the heroism of the lives of the people. It may perhaps seem too severe to say that much evangelistic work fails

[1] Picht, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

because it is too cheap, but it is true that the presentation of the Gospel of God to men ought to take full knowledge of the condition of those to whom it is preached. Medical science has much to teach the Church here. The doctor isolates each case, records its heritage and history, notes its symptoms, and prescribes accordingly. The Settlement Movement steadily advanced along a similar line. It brought men into the tumultuous life of a district, in the first place to learn, and, only secondarily to teach. Each Residenter in a Settlement who was observant became conscious that every individual life coming within his range demanded individual study and care. He became more and more afraid of intellectual or religious "quack medicines"; he shared with medical science a growing belief in preventive methods, and in diet rather than medicine. A deeper study of human need brought him to a quieter study of the methods of his Lord, and here again the impressive truth was seen, that Jesus Christ constantly dealt with individual men, and with each in a different way. Like a wise Physician He diagnosed before prescribing.

The claim may justly be advanced that those who trained themselves in the Settlement became afterwards the leaders of those social reforms which have done so much both to call the attention of the nation to the problems awaiting solution, and to point the way to that solution. The life of Canon Barnett is witness to this fact, and the list of names of those who resided in Toynbee

Hall and afterwards became the advisers and counsellors of statesmen, is a long one.

The Settlement Movement stood therefore for intelligence and common sense being applied to religious work and life. It urged that men should know both the social and individual life of their fellows before they applied their remedies to their diseases, and herein it had a great attraction for the young and eager minds of recent years.

III. The central and deep thing, however, in the whole Settlement Movement is the place it gives to *Friendship*. Its early weakness was that men with largess to offer, not of money, but of resource of thought and intellectual equipment, came among their less fortunate fellows with a certain air of superiority. It is extremely difficult for men trained and equipped in different ways to find a level ground for meeting, but many of the Settlements maintain that because they are founded on a religious basis this level meeting ground is secured. No one man has any more right to God than another. Dowry of intellect or opportunity does not affect this. A true understanding of Christianity obliterates class distinctions, and reverses the ordinary judgments of men. "Whosoever will be first among you shall be servant of all." In the light of this an opportunity of frank friendship such as the Settlement offered has been eagerly grasped by many people, especially by young men and women. To live close beside one another at least affords an opportunity of friendship. To have in common

similar surroundings and similar experiences makes friendship truer. To be welcomed, as those are who reside in a Settlement which has been established for some time, as friends, means very much. To offer yourself to the eyes and minds and hearts of your neighbours is both easier and yet more difficult than to come and speak to them, and then disappear again. And because friendship was the greatest enrichment of life to those who had lived in a University together and made and won friends there, they naturally turned in that direction to express their religious life on a broader field. Many men to whom speech on religious matters was intensely difficult found in friendship an outlet for their deepest thought. Indeed it is here that the Settlement Movement still possesses attraction, even though its early enthusiasm may have been somewhat spent. It offers range and variety in approaching men; and it lays weight upon the impact of life upon life more than of word upon mind.

It is easy to criticize the Settlement Movement, for its limitations and faults are obvious, but its value is great and its work has stood the test of time. It has adopted different forms in different cities, from the large central institution, with its "monastic" or "hostel" life, to the scattered groups of men and women living in similar houses in some densely populated district of a town. But in every form its main contention stands, that "those who have" owe something to "those who have not," and that the more their service

costs them the more it is worth to the community. They offer friendship; and teaching of Jesus is clear and definite—that friendship is the richest and most enriching thing in human life.

He who in the last hours of His earthly life said quietly to His disciples, "Henceforth I call you not servants: but I have called you friends," still finds an utterance of His love in this great truth. Those who have shared the life of a Settlement, and used it as their instrument for reaching the lives of other men, are aware of a Spirit revealing itself in unexpected ways, and claiming men who otherwise might stand outside the range of the Word of Truth to give their attention and their serious consideration to this quiet Voice, "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you."

Is this not, very plainly, a method of evangelism?

CHAPTER IV

THE BROTHERHOOD MOVEMENT

Rev. Tom Sykes

The birth of a new religious society is frequently a thrilling and revealing story. The origin of a Movement, spiritual in its aim and evangelistic in its method, is not always easy to capture and locate. "The wind bloweth where it listeth. Outposts and skirmishers precede the array of the Lord of Hosts." God is ever causing fresh light and truth to break into human experience, renewing it with quickening life. A new vigour of spiritual energy bursts out upon the nations and quickly challenges them. Sometimes Movements are born silently as the dawn, but the multitudes are slow in recognizing that a fresh day has begun. Slowly and surely its warm and quickening breath glides through every pore and gathers a generous heat around the heart. Nature does her finest work in secrecy and silence. In Spring time, Winter, aged and grey, saunters off, and bud and blossom make hedgerow and orchard gay with beauty and fragrance. It is quietly done, and the doing is the only announcement. In some such modest and anonymous fashion many religious

Movements which have turned over new pages in history have made their start. It was somehow thus that the Brotherhood Movement began. It was born of the Spirit, and its credentials and justifications are the hosts of men who have been lifted up and the finer temper pervading home and associations.

The first demonstration in recent times that religious meetings for men were a power for good was in the missions conducted by Moody and Sankey. In those remarkable meetings the late Professor Henry Drummond and others not only rendered valuable service but received a rare baptism of spiritual insight. They discovered a rich and amazing variety of temperament, sensitiveness, and experience in the congregation. No patented stereotyped method could be uniformly effective. Personal Evangelism is a skilled and delicate ministry. The Evangelist, be he an individual or a church, must be willing to become all things to all men if by any means he may save some. Catholicity of sympathy and patience of hope are indispensable. One of the earliest Brotherhoods in Britain was started by Professor Drummond in Glasgow, and it continues unto this day. It is interesting—and more—to contemplate what the influence of work of this kind might have been had it been enthusiastically followed up. Contact and interest are essential to the effective extension of the Kingdom of God. The manhood of this country might have been saved from the drift into Marxian materialism, for economic equity is the creation and virtue of Christian

experience. We might also have been spared some of the blight of a Godless science and reckless worship of mammon, and so have prevented the evolved degeneration which at last wallowed in the horrors of war. It must be confessed that the failure to take advantage of Moody's illustration has been a sad and chronic impoverishment.

The next outbreak toward Brotherhood is associated with a newspaper census. The staggering figures it disclosed were a challenge. Almost 85 per cent. of the population were out of touch with religious worship in the Churches. The Church could not treat this with indifference and retain its faith in the Gospel of Christ as the power of God unto salvation. The primary responsibility of Christians is not to maintain the fabric of the Church, but to preach the Gospel. They must go out and get a vital connection with the crowd. Without contact nothing can be done. With contact all things are possible. It will involve self-abnegation and adaptation of means to ends. Could this contact be secured by a bright human religious service on a Sunday afternoon? Exactly fifty years ago the first meeting of this kind was held in the Congregational Church at West Bromwich. It was a plain religious service, evangelistic in form and appeal. Some of the stately formality of ordinary services was discarded. It was an earnest attempt—a beginning. It speedily demonstrated that there is a way to the hearts of men full of promise, and a response. The success of this experiment was contagious.

Christianity is not first taught—it is caught. "More and more it spreads and grows." In many parts of the country meetings were commenced. Of their value and success there can be no doubt. After the first flush of novelty had passed the difficulties of consolidation became apparent. The Movement had not contemplated nor prepared for anything separate from the Churches. The leaders were unfortunate in their name. Pleasant Sunday Afternoon, abbreviated into P.S.A., does not mean much. It became a target for the cynic. The meetings were not ecclesiastically tidy enough for the clerical mind, and too proletarian for the comfortable church member. This was unfortunate in every way. Many good men were chilled in their relations with the Church. The Church alienated a useful means of extending her activities and a fruitful source of redemptive influence. On the other hand, the Movement would have avoided many of the vagaries which have made its history so uneven. Nor would it have been compelled to become for self-preservation a National Organization of affiliated societies. The need for this has produced the positive aim of Brotherhood. Even yet the Movement endeavours not to become a new sect or denomination. Its ideal is for every Church to become a Christian Brotherhood and every Brotherhood a Church.

What is coiled up in a new expression of religion discloses itself in the process of service. To do is also to know. The Brotherhood Movement is obviously something more than an answer to the

challenge of a church census. It implies, what has not yet been fully realized, that a new attitude, a new hunger and spirit, have emerged in society. This is most important. Loyalty to quality is an acid test of fidelity, but adaptability of method is a sign of vitality. Evangelism must recognize the best route for effective approach. Coercion, arbitrary demands, stunt sensationalism defeat themselves. In a hundred years the nation has passed through a critical change in its mode of living. It has ceased to be a predominantly rural, rustic, and agricultural people, and become a city, town, and industrial population. The critical change in a nation's history—the time when its destiny trembles in the balance—is this transition in the life of its people. The old sturdy individuality and self-reliance are considerably modified, if not submerged in mass association. The physical vigour of open-air life —a fine ventilation for the soul—is now impossible to the worker in the factory and the pit, and the dweller in long unlovely streets. The rustic simplicity of country life is substituted by the glamour of amusements. The crowd temper, the disposition to act in concert, the danger of mob passion definitely emerge. A hunger for fellowship, for companionship, for fraternity, is a real craving. Religion cannot afford to neglect this affinity. It ought to lay hold and give the desire of daily life a refining fulfilment. The Brotherhood Movement to the best of its ability is trying to do this. The strong dislike, widely felt to crude notions of saving the soul, finds its explanation in

this change of desire. The soul cannot be saved in isolation. Salvation is a personal experience but it is also a social service. "What shall we do to be saved?" Brotherhood answers: "To be saved, save! Save and you will be saved." There is an extensive area of human nature to open up, explore, and cultivate for the Kingdom of God, and in this enterprise, Brotherhood tries to be a pioneer.

The change in the association and occupation of the majority of the people had far-reaching effects. We have got to face these stern and stubborn results. A wide, deep gulf separates the bulk of workmen from organized religion. They are mainly indifferent, some are scornful and angry. They have ceased to expect anything from the Churches. When the Church makes an effort they suspect the motive, and surmise a disguised attempt to keep them "duly reverent to their social betters." It is hard to persuade them that Christians are absolutely disinterested. An evangelistic mission is to them a recruiting campaign for church membership, and they resolve not to be caught! Denominational differences, sectarian distinctions, variations of church polity are just foreign to them. If their attention is to be won there is a preliminary and elementary ministry to be carried out. Redemption is by identity. Search must be made for beginnings. "To be our Saviour He became our brother." I do not claim that the attitude of men to the Church and religion is always justified. I think they are often ignorantly and ungenerously wrong. But right or

wrong we must face the facts. There they are! Can we leave them as they are? We need not be afraid of the facts. The Gospel is a Power by which we overcome. Some of its greatest triumphs have been won by the "kindly hand." It is not the spoken word, the stately etiquette of ornate ritual, but the living word of brotherly kindness that reveals the secret of the Gospel.

The Brotherhood Movement is also attempting to meet the new demand which is being made on religion. The almost universal desire is for a radical and liberating change in the relationships of life. Certain inescapable truths of life are now forcefully asserting themselves. The war did not create them, but it did give them point and challenge. They cannot be shelved or side-tracked. They are up for a hearing and out to have their way. We were promised a New World Order. Obviously diplomacy and politics cannot create it. Can religion become the leader and commander of the people? Dare it make the attempt? The nation has passed through a long night of agony and we are fronted by the red dawn of a new day. Hope springs to life and awakens desires fringed with glowing expectations. Can this new day of humanity be developed into the bright excellency of a fine-hearted fraternity? Is there sufficient strength of latent goodwill which can be mobilized and applied to national and international affairs? It is the issue of the hour—and the ages. Materialism is man conquered by the world. Brotherhood is the world overcome by man.

The fundamental test of religion to-day is whether it is capable of thinking in the terms of humanity and creating a wholesome human society.

The birth of a social consciousness, and a social conscience, is the most characteristic development of the present generation. All the inventions and discoveries of science pale into insignificance compared with the robust promise of this new sense of life. Human society is now regarded as an organism, a vital unity. We are members one of another for weal or woe. If one member suffers the body is impoverished. Humanity is a collective soul and righteousness of life its exaltation. Brotherhood expresses its inspiring spirit and realizes its ministry in the development of human welfare. It believes there will be peace on earth when there is goodwill among men. It seeks to tear up the noxious weeds of envy, suspicion, and hate. To awaken and foster the plants of trust, mutuality, and kindness. It believes in the possibility and the practicability of the will to fellowship. It is therefore preparing the way for a fresh expression of religion. The old artificial distinctions are being transcended. The sacred and the secular can no longer be regarded as separate compartments. At best they were but accommodations to circumstances and now they are both false and pernicious. Religion is never safe when it acts on the defensive. It is never dignified when it apologizes for its existence. "Go ye into the all world—and lo."

The Brotherhood Movement has given much

time and attention to the vast army of the unemployed. During the last two years I have addressed tens of thousands of these men. What a tragic waste of life there has been daily. I must put on record that I think the Church has missed a great opportunity. I am afraid it is almost too late! The majority of these men are the sturdy, honest citizens of Britain. They have just been classified as the unemployed. The insurance allowance has kept body and soul together—no more. The hopeless struggle for the body has blighted the soul. How does poverty and industrial helplessness affect men? It produces a withering sense of personal nothingness. The white flower of hope is frost-nipped in the soul. "No man careth for my soul." Think of the effects on a man as a father, husband, and citizen. The effects on the mother and the children. We have indeed a fine and patient democracy! We have tried to minister a bit of good cheer and help. A hand-shake with a brotherly heart throbbing in it passes on what is beyond money and beyond price. Here is the first task of any serious evangelism. Wisely attempted the response is beyond question. The men with the hoe, bowed by the weight of centuries, refuse to remain like dumb driven cattle. "Man cannot live by bread alone," but he cannot live without it. How he gets it, what it costs, whether he can get it at all, is not an economic question merely, it is a religious question, for it pierces to the throbbing nerve of the soul. Service of this kind is a revealing experience. The

latent good in men discloses its presence in shy and surprising ways. The emphasis on the spiritual ideal rather than a critical description of their sins and follies is the right note to strike. Truly the fields are white unto harvest.

Arising out of the attempt to serve the unemployed worker, Brotherhood is attempting a solution of the industrial problems. They bristle with difficulties, but something ought to be done. For weal or woe we are quickly capturing and subduing the forces of nature. Is it possible to get all this aid from the physical world and use it for the nurturing of the soul and the elevation of the race? We have got to handle these wealthy resources. No ascetic withdrawal from the world is possible. The burning question is, Can we moralize the industrial, economic, and commercial activities? Can we achieve a civilization which overcomes the world, not by running away from it, but by honourably using it for the welfare of the race. We are endeavouring to promote the spirit of industrial altruism. Co-operation instead of conflict, interdependence rather than independence, is the way to root out the poisonous weeds of suspicion, mistrust, and strife. Before society can enter upon an era of harmony, security, and a higher way of living, all its activities must be informed by a social motive which finds its inspiration in advancing human welfare. Industry must be regarded as a patriotic social service. We have prepared a manifesto for the Government based upon wide, varied, and reliable experience.

The advantage of an industrial truce for a period of at least five years is proposed. A genuine effort to be made for the realization of Brotherhood in industry and avoid a return to what is essentially industrial civil war.

The Brotherhood Movement has never formulated a special doctrinal creed. It adopts as its motto, " One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." Its aims and objects may be summarized as follows :—

A. To proclaim the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man.
B. To foster and practise the fraternal spirit of Christianity.
C. To encourage public-spirited Cizitenship and unite in public Welfare Work.
D. To promote peace on earth and goodwill amongst men.

Ideally, the Movement preserves the responsibility of personality and awakens a sense of obligation. It means that mankind has to be moulded into a universal society ; in other words, that the " Kingdom come," and the " will of God be done on earth as in heaven." The organization of a Brotherhood is quite representative with President, Vice-President, Secretaries, Treasurer, Musical Director, Registrar, Executive, and Representative Council. The meetings for worship are shared. The President announces the hymns and conducts the service. Prayer is offered by some Christian Brother who knows beforehand of this

ministry. The Scriptures are read by another. It is usual to have a solo at the meeting. Visitation is probably the most important feature of the organization of a Brotherhood. I have been surprised at the amount of genuine pastoral work that men can do and are glad to do. They not only visit the sick, but canvass the neighbourhood. There is nothing official about their approach. It impresses by its spontaneous interest in the welfare of others. What a quantity of explanations people give for leaving the ordinary worship of the Church! The reason for doing so is often prejudice, but it is real to those who make it. They are glad to get another religious association. On the lowest computation of figures supplied to us last year our members contributed and distributed in relief and aid not less than £20,000. Going about doing good is irresistible.

It is a mistake to imagine that the Brotherhood Movement is only concerned with social questions. We can supply sufficient material for a half-dozen volumes of broken earthenware that has been remade by the ministry of the Movement. We would refer our readers to *Idylls of the Brotherhood* by William Heal, and *Brotherhood Stories* by Ramsay Guthrie. Another book is already in the press. Each story is based upon an actual fact. During the last eighteen months we have been able to do constructive evangelistic work. I have been able, with the invaluable assistance of Mr Tom Holland, who has for a number of years consecrated his marvellous gifts of song to the

service of the Kingdom, to take in great centres evangelistic missions. Here the Brotherhoods and the Churches have combined for a new presentation of the Old Gospel. It has confirmed our belief that the people can be reached. They welcome a devoted effort. They accept and surrender to the call and welcome of Jesus. At the present moment the opportunity and transforming effect of such a ministry is beyond description. The Church might become the "Leader and Commander of the People."

We are frequently asked does your Brotherhood Movement help the Church. I can prove abundantly that it does! I know some Churches which, if they were to lose their Brotherhood and Sisterhood, would have very little left. But the primary question ought to be—"Does it help men?" The Church as the instrument of the Kingdom ought to be able to reap the harvest. I know there have been misunderstandings, and here and there unfortunate experiences. All the blame has not been on one side. Experience has taught me that for the majority of the people the Church starts too high up. We cannot be too high in our ideal of the refining ministry of the Church, but at the beginning a generous simplicity and adaptability are necessary. In many districts it would be an advantage if the Church service on a Sunday evening were conducted on Brotherhood lines. The morning service might be the ministry of the minister to the Church; the evening meeting the collective ministry of the

Church to the community. It is difficult to set down how to start a Brotherhood, because different localities require different treatment. Local knowledge must guide action. I am sure of one thing, that its primary incentive must be religious. It must awaken and enlist men for a practical expression of the essential Christian spirit.

Dr Hatch in his book, *The Organization of the Early Christian Churches*, says: "The unaccomplished mission of Christianity is to reconstruct society on the basis of brotherhood." The pronouncement of one so reliable in his knowledge of the aim and spirit of the Early Church implies that the Christian Brotherhood is the fulfilment of the Gospel. It is a fresh presentation of Jesus in thought and expression. His message was clearly the good news of goodwill towards men. The Brotherhood Movement has already touched the British Colonies and several nations in Europe. Scotland has its own Brotherhood Union. In England and Wales it has a membership of at least 125,000. Its members are gathered from all ranks of British society. The point of contact is the touch of nature which makes the whole world kin. For the purpose of conserving and developing its life, the Movement is organized into 1200 Societies. The organization is slender and uneven because of the desire not to become another denomination, but the devotion and enthusiasm are strong and intense. "The hunger for Brotherhood is at the bottom of the unrest of the civilized world." This Movement is out to appease that hunger with the Bread of Life.

CHAPTER V

THE INDUSTRIAL CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

P. T. R. Kirk, M.A.

The Industrial Christian Fellowship, in its present form, came into being at the close of the Great War as a development of the older Navvy Mission, which had been at work among the manual labourers of the country since 1877. The changed conditions of the industrial classes, brought about by the great upheaval and other causes, necessitated a complete readjustment of attitude on the part of the Church. Fifty years of free education, combined with a more comfortable standard of living which had resulted from a period of high wages, and supplemented by voluntary agencies of a philanthropic character, such as Church Clubs, the Scout Movement, Care Committees, and so forth, had produced a proletariat so different in character from that of 1877, that the aims and methods of the older society had become obsolete and entirely inadequate for the task of facing the gigantic social problems confronting the Church at the end of 1918. The idea of a "Mission" to

the industrial classes, as distinct from any other, was felt to express a sense of patronage, by no means consistent with the spirit of Christian courtesy ; and that of " Fellowship," an Industrial Fellowship uniting Employer and Employed in the common bond of the Christian religion, was substituted accordingly. The Fellowship, in fact, has incorporated into its evangelistic zeal for the salvation of manual workers the high spiritual and intellectual ideals of the Christian Social Union, its chivalrous forerunner, which was founded by Bishop Westcott and others in 1899. The principles of this noble union have been magnificently claimed by such men as F. D. Maurice and Charles Kingsley in the past, and by Bishop Gore and the late Henry Scott Holland in our own generation. It is but fair to quote the names of these eminent Churchmen in answer to the taunt that the Church has cared nothing, during the past century, for the welfare of the masses of the people ; and it is the glory of the Industrial Christian Fellowship that it has attempted, with so large a measure of success, to fuse into one society the evangelistic workers of the artisan classes, as represented by the Navvy Mission, and the intellectual forces of the Church which have been making their contribution towards a Christian solution of social problems through the agency of the Christian Social Union.

The first objective of the Industrial Christian Fellowship is to endeavour to bring back into the fellowship of the Church the great mass of people

—about 75 per cent. of the population of this country—who are at present outside the influence of all forms of organized Christianity. History has shown that with the development of industrial machinery, and the growth of capitalistic enterprise, there has been a gradual deadening of the spiritual fibre of the nation. At the same time there has been a sharp line of cleavage between the pride of wealth and the squalor of the slums. Godliness has been left out of the life of the materialistic capitalist and of the miserable wage-slave alike, and to this day, in London at any rate, our largest congregations are made up of the middle-classes, who not only frequent the suburban churches, but also augment the number of those who worship both in the poorer districts and in the West End. The Industrial Christian Fellowship does not endorse the taunt that the Church of England is a "class" Church—the Church of the rich and powerful; but it does support the statement of the Industrial Committee of the Lambeth Conference (1920) that "We cannot claim a good record with regard to Labour questions. Since the beginning of the industrial revolution only a minority of the members of our Church have insisted on the social application of the Gospel." The Industrial Christian Fellowship claims that mankind needs a religion, and that no other religion meets the need but the religion of Jesus Christ. It holds that this truth can best be brought home to Labour at the moment by Christian working-men, who have shared the

experiences of the wage-earners, and understand their difficulties. It therefore employs numbers of them as agents, and the staff is continually growing. The majority have at some time earned their living in factories, workshops, collieries, and so on, and they know from personal experience how to appeal to their brethren and bring out all that is best in them. With the permission of employers and foremen they visit the factories, and address the workpeople in the canteens. They also ally themselves with the Workers' Educational Association, the Adult School Movement, and other organizations that have weight in the world of Labour. From time to time they receive invitations to address the Trade Union branch, or the Local Trades and Labour Council, on the need of religion, or the place of the Church in the Labour Movement. They endeavour to give the Christian point of view on the live questions of the day, which affect the daily life of the workers, such as unemployment, production, housing, education, and many others. Every effort is made to give them expert knowledge on these subjects, and they are equipped for their duties by a period of practical training, and by a continual supply of the best books on social problems, industrial history, sociology, and economics. They take their stand constantly in the open air and gather the crowds around them, striving to bring their listeners to a closer knowledge of Christ and His Gospel, and appealing to them to apply His principles as the solution to all the problems that confront them.

Something more than the ordinary open-air meeting is necessary. The inhabitants of the slums and insanitary tenements will not take our message seriously until they believe that we mean to give them homes instead of hovels, honour instead of contempt, and security instead of dread as they face the problems of sickness and old age. We have to show them that God is Love and that the Christian religion has a value for this life as well as for the life to come.

The Fellowship is not content to be in close touch with Labour alone. Its staff of Clerical Directors and Messengers, both men and women, are taking the same message to other sections of society. They visit the Rotary Clubs, Chambers of Commerce, and groups of employers, in order to reach the business men, and take part in all kinds of conferences between the Church and the industrial world. With a view to educating the public in the principles of the Fellowship, meetings are addressed and sermons preached wherever openings can be secured. From time to time an industrial city is attacked by the Fellowship *en masse*, and from twenty to forty people are sent to hold a "Crusade." The party includes clergy, laymen, and women. In the streets they are to be heard preaching the social Gospel of the Great Friend of all the world. Indoors, representatives of Church, Employers, and organized Labour meet together in conference and debate to find out how much there is in common among them all. The result, as a rule, exceeds the expectation of the

Fellowship, provided that the right men are ready to follow up the work on more permanent lines. The Fellowship's position is that Democracy is a power that has come to stay; and that it is the duty of the Church to take the ideals of Labour and, where necessary, to seek to Christianize them.

The second object of the Fellowship is to arouse the conscience of Christian people to a need of spiritual change in the industrial life of the country. It works on the belief that for Christians the proper procedure is not to formulate a social policy and then seek to justify it from the Christian religion, but rather to start with our Lord's revealed Will, and to deduce from it a social programme with no equivocation or evasion. There is a growing realization that, for a proper understanding of social and industrial questions, study is essential, and it is the aim of the Fellowship to promote such study from the Christian standpoint. The Fellowship has a lending library, and a scheme of correspondence classes which are open to all. Study Circles are constantly in session at headquarters, and suitable outlines are obtainable for groups throughout the country.

In its latest Annual Report the Fellowship points out that the achievement of all great social reforms has always awaited the development of a deep religious conviction. It thanks God for the steady growth of its evangelistic work, side by side with its efforts to apply the vital uncompromising truths of Christianity to the great moral and economic issues of the day. Its efforts have

been hampered neither by indifference nor by opposition, but only by lack of adequate financial support; and it is noteworthy that the financial support which it has received is inadequate, not because it is in itself insignificant, but because it is out of all proportion to the task which lies in the hands of the Directors, and because the Fellowship has grown in a few years to such vast dimensions, and has aroused so widespread an interest among the highly-educated sections of the community, filling them with an ardent enthusiasm for social reform.

On January 29th of last year, a meeting at headquarters, convened by the Bishop of Lichfield, resulted in the following manifesto, which was signed by no less than thirty-seven bishops present on that occasion :—

" We, the undersigned, desire to affirm our conviction that the Industrial Christian Fellowship is doing work of the highest value to the Church and the Nation, both in its task of winning men and women to a personal discipleship of Jesus Christ, and also in its endeavour to bring the Gospel into action, and thereby to carry into effect the resolutions laid down by the Lambeth Conference in 1920 on the social implications of the Gospel. We believe that the I.C.F. in complete independence of any party is fulfilling a function which no other agency is able to undertake, and that it would be disastrous to the whole work of the Church if it were obliged to curtail its enterprise. We earnestly commend the I.C.F. to the

prayers and active support of all Christian people, and we are convinced that in the ideals which it sets before itself it stands for nothing new and nothing irrelevant to the Church's eternal and abiding mission."

The Directors realize that, if the message of the Fellowship is to become effective, the Fellowship must itself be in living touch with the Saviour of the world. They plead, therefore, that the work and workers may be remembered at every altar, and that many will become members of the Prayer Union of the Fellowship. From time to time Retreat Conferences are held in some convenient place, in order to help the staff in their devotional life, and to bring them into fellowship with one another.

One of the institutions of the Fellowship is "Industrial Sunday," which in the past four years has been observed in hundreds of churches throughout England. The idea of a Sunday set apart for this purpose was carried out by the Fellowship in an endeavour to bring Christian principles to bear upon the pressing problems of the time, and to inspire all persons engaged in industrial life with the spirit of service. The Fellowship holds to the conviction that only as men learn to will and work together in the spirit and power of Christ will come that world-wide unity of service and spiritual fellowship wherein alone is peace; and in this principle it is being magnificently backed up by employers and large property-owners in England to-day. "On this Sunday," they say, "we are reminded of the need

for spiritual guidance and grace in our industrial lives, and of the call to dedicate our work to God for His glory and for the benefit of our fellow-men and women. No movement or effort towards progress that is not inspired by this great purpose can have any lasting character or value; and there can be no hope of industrial peace unless the Spirit of Christ is allowed to function and reign amongst us." At the same time it is interesting to note the attitude of Labour Leaders and Trade Unionists. "Industrial Sunday, promoted and organized by the Industrial Christian Fellowship, is now in a fair way to become an established anniversary for the whole Labour Movement, and the whole Christian Church in our land, and this year, following closely as it will upon the great Conference on Christian Politics, Economics, and Citizenship, it should provide an exceptional opportunity, not only to set the tone and strengthen the purpose of our own Demonstration, but to arouse the conscience and focus the attention of all Christians upon the Labour question, and all those vitally important issues of domestic international concern which are bound up with, or react upon, the conditions of Labour. There is common ground for the Labour Movement and the Christian Church in the declaration that only by regarding these issues in accord with the Spirit and teaching of Jesus Christ can we hope to find right solutions and achieve sound economic results. The world is weary of a violent and conscienceless materialism in politics and economics, but it lacks

the faith boldly to renounce the old evil ways and to follow Christ in the paths of justice and of peace." These two statements should do something, on the one hand to combat the bitterness and prejudice that exist in some quarters against property-owners as a whole, and on the other to allay the fears of sober-minded and law-abiding people of a strongly conservative type, who see in the Labour Movement mainly a juggernaut car riding down the liberty of the subject without regard for honour, conscience, and religion. It is obvious that there is much honest desire on both sides to see what is the will and purpose of Jesus in our social relationships, and to discover the most practical way of ordering social and economic life in accordance with that purpose. To foster, instruct, and develop this desire is the aim and work of the Industrial Christian Fellowship.

The Fellowship holds that God is our Father and that we are all His children, one family here upon earth, every member of which is of equal and infinite value in His sight. That we being equal in value are vastly unequal in powers of mind and body, and that therefore it is His will that the strong should only use their strength to serve and uplift the weak. That this can only be done by the true charity that avoids patronage and pauperization, knows no pride of privilege or position, meets a brother as an equal and helps him to find his highest self through Christ in the family of God. That, by the inter-communication between the nations due to the scientific discoveries

of the age, God is knitting His family into a closer material unity than they have ever known before, and that by these means He is calling all men, not to force and rivalry, but to a world-like unity of service and to that Fellowship of the Spirit wherein alone is peace. That this Kingdom of God, which we must ever seek to build on earth, comes not by sword or strife, nor yet by sitting still, but as men learn to will and work together in ever active love, in the spirit and power of Him Who came not to be ministered unto but to minister. The objects of the Fellowship are to present Christ as the living Lord and Master in every department of human life, and to proclaim the supreme authority of the Christian law of love; to minister, by living agents, to all engaged in the industrial world, seeking to win them to personal discipleship of Jesus Christ, and to unite all classes in a bond of Christian fellowship and prayer; and to study under the guidance of the Holy Spirit how to apply the moral truths and principles of Christianity to the social, economic, and industrial systems of the world. The Industrial Christian Fellowship is under an obligation to give a primary place to the needs of those engaged on public and other construction work.

In the experience of the Fellowship, its work of evangelizing the masses of manual labourers in this country can best be carried out by means of agents who have themselves been formerly engaged in occupations of the same nature as those of the people whom they are seeking to help. The

Fellowship is also sending out women agents, who—while working side by side with the men, and co-operating with them in every possible way—naturally regard as their first interest and charge the women and girls employed in factories, workshops, and shops. It is the opinion of the Fellowship that those who stand at the present moment outside the influence of every form of organized religion, can be better reached by their brother working-men than by the clergy or the philanthropically-minded laity of the better-educated classes. It is quite unthinkable that no effort should be made by the Church to end the widespread alienation of the poorer classes from the religious thought and effort and ideals of the nation as a whole. It is not simply a question of the salvation of the souls of the working-men and women—though it is worthy of remembrance that among such as these our Lord's earthly ministry was mainly carried on—but the whole Church is the poorer for the loss of their strength on the side of the Christian religion. The ranks of the clergy are far more depleted than they need be, because we do not find to-day, as we did in past centuries, the passionate lovers of Jesus Christ among our humble citizens and villagers—or is it that they lack the opportunity for training? The work of the Church overseas is hindered, because the work of the Church at home is so restricted to those who, if not rich in a material sense, are in enjoyment of most of those better things which make life worth living—a good home,

a cultivated mind, a fairly congenial occupation, pleasant companionship, and reasonable opportunities for recreation and perhaps travel.

The Fellowship recognizes that to transfer power from a self-seeking few to a self-seeking many would be quite useless. The only hope lies in the evangelization of the great Labour Movement. If the masses will not come to the Church, the Church must go to the masses. On this principle the Industrial Christian Fellowship takes its stand, and goes forth upon its mission.

CHAPTER VI

FELLOWSHIP OF THE KINGDOM

Rev. J. Arundel Chapman, M.A.

In the most gloomy days of the war, when its full impact was being felt and victory seemed very far off, a small group of ministers began to meet together in London. Some of them were already friends; but others were complete strangers, and how they were drawn together they do not know to this day. That they were Wesleyans was an accident, for from the beginning what they concerned themselves with was Christianity itself rather than any of its denominational expressions. They found that they were all bitterly dissatisfied, and this common feeling became at once a centre of unity. From the very beginning a wonderful fellowship linked them together—a fellowship which was so new that it brought home to them the fact that previously they had been very lonely. It also caused them to think, as they had never thought before, of the "Togetherness" which is so characteristic of the early chapters in Acts. Perhaps dissatisfaction is too weak a word to describe what first bound them together; they were rather in a state of rebellion against the

ineffectiveness of the Church, and in their early gatherings they said many of those hot things which young men imagine they fully mean. But the more they thought and prayed together the more clearly they began to see, and they quickly made a discovery which proved a turning-point in their lives. They found that the root of their dissatisfaction lay ultimately not in the Church and in what the Church was doing or failing to do, but in themselves. It was in their own lives that there was something deeply wrong. Slowly but surely realizing this they began to say to one another, "God is showing us things that we did not expect to see; He is taking us deeper than we have ever been taken before. This little fellowship must go on. Let us continue to meet together once a fortnight, and, leaving all else, let us go to the fountain-head, the New Testament itself."

This led to a second discovery, which was even more far-reaching in its consequences than the first. They had all been readers of their New Testaments for many years, but now they approached them with new eyes, and they began to see there a life of which previously they had not been hauntingly conscious. It was a transformed, radiant, and triumphant life. It brought large resources, found nothing impossible, and had a special faculty of communicating itself to others. There it stood out unmistakable and compelling, and how for many years they had been largely missing it was a source of amazement. It was

everywhere; every book, almost every chapter was about it, and the New Testament left one in no doubt as to its nature. It was a life of fellowship with God. In it the Father enjoyed the child, and the child enjoyed the Father in conscious companionship, and it was connected in the most intimate way with Jesus. Conscious of the haunting contrast between this life and their own, they began to challenge one another with the immense spiritual vitality of the New Testament, and frankly to confess that they themselves did not know God in that large and satisfying way in which He was known in the apostolic times. Humbly resolving to make the quest after God their dominating aim, they continued to meet together for over two years, and in this eventful period they made discoveries by which first their lives and then their ministries were profoundly changed.

1. They came really to love Jesus Christ. Looking back on their previous life, they confessed that hitherto they had only admired and reverenced Him. These feelings had been intense, but they had not got beyond them. Now these quickened into a burning love. To what they had found in Him there was only one possible response—a love expressing itself in passionate loyalty.

2. This love was no vague emotion without definite content and supports; it was created and fostered by what they found in Jesus. Fundamentally, it rested on a new and deeper discernment. In Him they discovered God. At first this was a historical discovery. They went back

to the early records, and they sat down and gazed at that figure which is portrayed in the Gospels. They were filled with gratitude for those new shafts of light which the study of the last fifty years has thrown on the man Christ Jesus. They explored His humanity, accepting to the full the limitations which made Him one with us, but as they did so they were carried beyond them. As they looked into His eyes, and listened to His words, as they saw the working of His mind, and felt the beating of His heart, they became utterly certain that they were face to face with God. Such perfect fellowship, such unwearying service, such holy love must be God present in human life. The words of St John ceased to be dogma, and became vital perception—"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." But this was far from being all. It has been truly said, "We may for a long time know spiritual facts without us, and then come suddenly to an interior knowledge of them so different from and transcending the other that it seems to be a difference in kind as well as in degree." At a certain stage this distinction became to them a very real one. The God whom they had seen in Jesus came into their own inward life. He came to offer all His gifts—forgiveness, restoration, new life ever becoming newer—and with His gifts that which is the consummation of them all, His own indwelling and abiding presence. They were filled with mingled amazement and joy. That the God and Father of Jesus Christ should come and dwell in them—it

seemed too good to be true. But true it was, and such good news begat a great impulse to share it with others.

3. The Cross assumed a new and paramount importance, passing from the circumference of their lives right to the centre. For weeks together they talked about the Cross, and none of them will ever forget the burning hearts with which they went away from these gatherings. After one of them one of their number made a Sermon on the Cross with which he has never failed to win men for Christ. At first the Cross seemed to speak with two voices. Firstly, it came with an immense offer. The God who in Jesus was prepared for all that the Cross meant—rejection, contempt, buffeting, scourging, and crucifixion—and who through it all still went on loving and offering Himself, thus turning defeat into victory, and rejection into a new and more compelling offer, must be a God to whose love there were no limits. He had left nothing undone ; He had come all the way ; He had faced the very worst. One could not doubt the offer of a God who was prepared for all that. Before the Cross, as one of the group said, they became certain about things, and they went with a fresh assurance to the words of Paul, " He that spared not His own Son, how shall He not also with Him freely give us all things." And in the presence of such a love there was only one thing to do—to accept it in utter sorrow of heart that one had neglected it so long. Secondly, the Cross came as an immense demand. It was the way of life for

the disciples. The Lord had said so Himself. "If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me," was His almost stern invitation; and the fact that they had been evading it again brought the members of the group to repentance. Humbly and penitently they had to start again. But was it possible to meet this demand? Was it not, as one of the group said, like being confronted with Hamlet, and being told to write a play like it. Was not the whole thing immeasurably beyond us? It did seem so until it was regarded in the light of what the Cross offered. Then and not till then did it become possible to meet it. The love which gave all would help to meet all. What seemed the two voices of the Cross were not two but one—one voice of love. As love gives all it requires all, and as it requires all it gives all the means of meeting its requirements. The offer had opened up new and higher levels of life, and on these higher levels all things were possible.

Meanwhile the example of the first group had called another into existence in North London. Three members of the original group spoke in the Wesleyan Conference in July 1917, and a number of articles were published in *The Methodist Times*, under the heading "Exploration." These articles were in many respects immature, but they were useful in indicating tendencies. They did not arrive at the goal, but they contained some fresh and stimulating accounts of the journey.

Urged on by the discovery and conscious of a deepening message, first one and then another of the group felt compelled to launch crusades in their neighbourhoods. These early campaigns attracted much attention because they were undertaken by ordinary suburban congregations. But on the whole the reports in the press tended to emphasize the more picturesque and less essential elements in them. Some early misconceptions, however, were dispelled, and the names of "mystics," "quietists," and "subjectivists," which had been freely applied to the members of the group at an earlier period, were now heard no more. The compelling inspirations of those who took part in these early campaigns were a big consciousness of good news which they had to tell and a firm resolve to break down the barriers of convention and to reach the outsider. One man in particular went boldly into public-houses to talk with the men there "as one of themselves"; others got up early in the morning to deliver brief messages to people on their way to work, and several began to preach in the open air.

In September 1919 there came two fresh developments. Three members of the group met, accidentally as it seemed, on a certain afternoon, and in a memorable conversation the discoveries and aspirations of two and a half years came to a new birth. They felt that these ought to be more widely shared, and resolved to appeal to the younger Wesleyan ministers of London to unite in a new fellowship. A meeting was called at

which, after a little initial uncertainty, a large enthusiasm was generated. A programme was adopted, and those who accepted it formed themselves into the Fellowship of the Kingdom. A week or two before this meeting there had been in Twickenham a united campaign, in which twelve ministers took part, as many of them as possible being present each evening. It created a considerable local impression; many were led to a personal knowledge of Christ, and on the last evening the Church was crowded. The campaign opened up new possibilities of corporate action. As there had been fellowship in the Quest, so there could be fellowship in the Crusade.

The Fellowship has three watchwords—the Quest, the Crusade, and Fellowship—and it is in the two former that its members find the new spirit which is to bind them together.

In the Quest they seek what God has freely offered in Jesus Christ—"His eternal love, His infinite grace, His perfect fellowship, all we want for holiness, righteousness, and for eternal life." The whole movement has sprung out of the conviction that much, if not all, of our present sense of failure comes from the fact that in the New Testament there are truths we have not been learning, inspirations we have not been finding, and forces of which we have not been laying hold. Without these we cannot match the tremendous times in which we live.

As the Quest passes into discovery it brings with it its own necessity for the Crusade. But the

Fellowship is always insisting on the fact that this should not be forced or taken up prematurely. A Crusade without a new vision of God behind it and the new resources which this brings will only put a good face upon things for a time, and then lead to further exhaustion. For a Crusade which is a ten days' fever, but without any deep spiritual roots, the Fellowship has no use. The Crusade which it preaches is something that will last a lifetime, and be always on. It is the sustained effort to make the Church once again militant. As regards the Crusade, no particular methods are laid down. The different groups are expected to discover those which will suit their own neighbourhoods.

In the pursuit of the Quest and the Crusade the greatest stress is laid on group-fellowship. "In this movement," so runs the first manifesto, "our first aim should be to start, in as many places as possible, small groups to supply a frank and living fellowship." The crucial problem is the establishment of these local groups, and experience has shown that wherever they have been started and maintained there has come a new spiritual stimulus. It is of great importance that those who have talked, and prayed, and sought together should act together. In meetings drawn from a wide area much enthusiasm may be created, but in most cases it is as quickly dissipated, because those who have felt and thought together get scattered, and when the time for action comes find themselves among the unresponsive. The

effect of a first visit to a Student Movement Conference, or to one of the numerous Fellowships which meet at Swanwick, is often to make those who have been there despair of local conditions, and such conferences and fellowships, influential though they have been in awakening individuals, have not yet made the large contribution which they will ultimately make, because as yet there are comparatively few local groups to sustain and pass on the new spiritual life found there. Local forces must be created which can express their corporate aspirations and discoveries in corporate action.

The idea is that these groups shall meet once a fortnight or as often as possible to explore the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In this circle of fellowship, with a new thoroughness and patience, with a fresh humility and penitence, we must seek to find for ourselves and others all that God has done for man in Jesus Christ. These group-meetings are intended to be homely and informal. After the opening devotional exercise the tone should be conversational; there should be periods for silence, recollection, and prayer, and they should be held, if possible, in some comfortable room.

What has the Fellowship done? It is still in its early days, but already the range of its activities is becoming very wide. Starting among a few Wesleyan ministers, it has spread in the most remarkable way in the Wesleyan Church; it is, also, rapidly extending among the ministers of the Primitive Methodist and United Methodist

Churches, and in other churches its influence is being felt. In its aims and methods it is not denominational, and a determined effort has been made to reduce its organization to the minimum. It was only reluctantly that the original members created any organization at all, and at every step they have been impelled by the new life they have found. At present only ministers are enrolled as members of the Fellowship, but its spirit has spread far and wide among all ages and classes both in the British Isles and in several of the Dominions; particularly in South Australia has it exercised a large influence.

Before something more is said of the Crusades, what it has accomplished may be summed up in five ways :—

1. It has established a large number of local groups; already there are hundreds of these, and their number is rapidly increasing. At present these groups seem dispersed and hidden, and likely to have no decisive influence, yet later it will be found (and is already being found) that through them there has been created a big fellowship of men and women who will work intelligently and enthusiastically, with light as well as with heat, for the Kingdom of God.

2. In these groups there has been a large discovery of the possibilities of Fellowship. People with varied interests, with the most different temperaments and gifts, have found something by which they have been taken out of themselves into something larger. To some it has been an

escape from loneliness, to others from a self-centredness which was cramping their lives, to others from a discouragement which made good work impossible, to others from positive unbelief, and they have found the joy, the confidence, and the companionship which come from being one with others.

3. In these groups many have found not only Fellowship but Christianity itself. They have been schools of discovery. One man confessed that for years Jesus seemed to be calling him through a door that was locked and the key of which was lost; in a group-meeting he suddenly found the key in his hand. Another, after coming into a group for a single meeting, frankly confessed, "If this is what Christianity means I have never been a Christian, but I mean to be."

4. Of the Pamphlets the following may be mentioned—*Our Methodist Heritage*, *Our Catholic Heritage*, *The Quest*, *The Group*, *The Fellowship of the Kingdom*, *Fellowship with Christ*, and *The Cross of Jesus*. There is also published quarterly a journal of fellowship—*Experience*. This journal has struck out on a new line, and in its own particular way is unique. It is having a large circulation. In addition a large number of Papers have been issued, for which there has been a heavy demand.

5. Each year the members of the Fellowship meet at Swanwick in Derbyshire: this annual gathering has become the rallying-point of the Movement. The first of these Conferences was

held in 1920, and it is significant that ever since that date the Wesleyan Church, after reporting decreases in its membership for fourteen successive years, has each year had substantial increases. The attendances at these Conferences has grown 50 per cent. each year. None who were present will ever forget one of the silent Communions, and two memorable evenings when "The Cross" and "Essentials of Revival" were the subjects. The words of Pascal's memorial, "Certitude, Joy, Certitude, Emotion, Sight, Joy," inevitably came into the minds of those who were present on those eventful nights.

Something must now be said of the Crusades which more than anything else have attracted attention to the Fellowship. The first thing which should be emphasized is that before they were attempted there was adequate spiritual preparation. In the early days of the group hardly any member of it so much as dreamed of the possibility of the Crusade. It was genuine spiritual discovery which turned their thoughts and energies in the new direction, and none were more surprised than the men themselves at the new development.

The Crusades have been many and various. In some cases a man has conducted his own Crusade from beginning to end. Several have tried this in the summer months with wonderful success—in fact, it has been found that summer has great advantages over winter. The methods adopted have been fourfold. Firstly, the neighbourhood

has been thoroughly canvassed. A number of voluntary workers have taken round handbills, and given personal invitations at the doors of the houses to people to join in the Crusade. This method has hardly ever failed to attract; in some cases congregations have been doubled in a week. Secondly, the minister himself has got up early in the morning, and gone to a railway station, a mill, or some busy thoroughfare, and has distributed handbills to the passers-by. This has proved most fruitful work. Often the sheer surprise of seeing "the parson" out at seven o'clock has made people resolve there and then to think differently of him, and to rally to him. Thirdly, open-air services have been held. In some cases some particular site, where a crowd would be likely to gather, has been selected for the whole Crusade. In other cases, where no such position was available, a number of short meetings (lasting half an hour, and with two or three on the same evening) have been held in different roads. One minister held thirty-five of these in seven weeks. Fourthly, in some cases the minister has visited the public-houses. This work is wonderfully interesting, and far easier than one would think. The Briton's sporting instinct and his regard for pluck always secure the minister a favourable reception. Several who have done this work have gone into the public-house as customers, ordering a glass of lemonade. The method is a novel one, and disarms the landlord. In these Crusades a meeting for prayer has been held on

Monday night, and Wednesday and Friday have been selected for open-air work. The point on which all the activities converge is the Sunday Evening Service.

In other cases a minister has invited other members of the Fellowship to help him. These efforts have been of two kinds. A short series of special services lasting from Monday to Thursday has been held to give to the Church a new vision and a new sense of possibility. To these no attempt is made to invite "the outsider." The whole aim has been to concentrate on the Church. At the end of these an appeal has been made to all who are prepared to help in a larger effort to come to a subsequent meeting, or to remain behind on the last night. Almost always the minister has found at once that he has thirty to forty people behind him on whom he can fully rely in making new plans.

Or a number of ministers work together in a ten days' Crusade, in which a definite attempt is made to reach those outside. This method has great advantages. The strain on any one man is lessened. One can undertake the early morning canvassing, another speak in the open-air, and a third conduct the services inside the church. The method of appeal has been various, but several of the members of the Fellowship who are not "born evangelists" have made use of the Roll. This is placed on a table at the front of the church before the congregation, and during the singing of the last hymn those who wish to follow Jesus

are urged publicly to come forward and sign the roll. One of the ministers has a talk afterwards with those who respond. The Fellowship feels the necessity of keeping this all-important work in the hands of the minister, or of thoroughly competent persons. All who have to do with seekers and converts should be carefully selected and trained. They have to meet human souls in the most sensitive state in which they can be, naked and uncovered before God, with all their conventional defences gone, and those who are to help them need a rare insight and sympathy, a deep and yearning tenderness which only come from a very intimate fellowship with Jesus.

Lastly must be mentioned the larger Crusades in which some thickly populated area is attacked in a concerted effort. The Fellowship has never yet held such an effort itself. It has, however, helped, and helped largely, in several such ventures. The outstanding example of this was the Tyneside Crusade. Its influence has been far-reaching—in fact it is not too much to say that it opened up before Methodism a new way forward. Three of its four Secretaries were members of the Fellowship, and the Fellowship furnished a large number of the missioners.

The whole of Tyneside was divided into seven areas, and these seven areas were united by a Central Executive. Each area, however, was self-contained, and enjoyed the largest measure of home-rule. It possessed its own committee, consisting of all the ministers of the area, and two

lay-representatives chosen by each Church. This Committee was responsible for making almost all the local arrangements. It settled the important question as to what Churches should be chosen as the centres for week-evening activities. On the Sunday all services were held as usual, but on the week-evenings neighbouring Churches united, selecting one Church as their common centre of operations. In one or two cases, however, this tendency was carried too far, and experience shows that the centres of activity should be multiplied rather than decreased. In the whole district there were sixty such centres.

The results surpassed all expectations. Churches were awakened to a new life, and decisions were counted by thousands rather than hundreds. The open-air work was most successful. One night a young man who responded to the appeal in one of the services admitted that he had been won in the open-air, and he added significantly, "There is something about this that one cannot resist."

One evening a tea and a social evening were arranged on the early-closing day for the shop-assistants of the town. Invitation cards were taken round to all the shops in the central area of Newcastle, and there was a large response. The experiment is certainly worth repeating.

One of the outstanding influences of the Crusade was on the missioners themselves. They felt the deep, authentic Christian thrill which turns ideas into visions and hard tasks into joyous ventures. One man remarked that he could understand why

the early Methodists had so many hymns "For Believers rejoicing": they were always out on the Crusade. Another, who had never seen so large a response to his appeal, was almost broken down by the remarkable scenes which followed his preaching. A third said, "I shall return to my church a new minister to begin a new ministry." All the missioners felt that they had touched a flame and caught fire, and they left Tyneside resolved to do all they could to arrange a similar effort in their own towns.

When one considers the genius of Christianity, one feels that it might have been created not two thousand years ago, but expressly for the present age. Its ethical vitality, its exuberant joy, its abounding fellowship are the very elements for the lack of which our distracted and confused age has been failing to realize its rich possibilities. If these can be recovered (and they are being recovered), the Church will have at once a large and compelling message. There can be no doubt from what they have come. It has been from an intimate fellowship with God, based on a living experience of His redeeming love. Ultimately the Church has only one hearth—the simple hearth of the Gospel, which is nothing else but the good news of the love of God. And the Fellowship of the Kingdom has sprung from the conviction that the perplexity and uncertainty of recent years, the depressing feeling that we have been putting forth much effort and getting very little done, have come because we have allowed the love of God to become

a dim and far-off thing. In penitence and in hope, in humility and in confidence, it is turning afresh to God to find in Him the elemental inspirations that will create that new, united, and militant Christianity which so many are yearning to see.

CHAPTER VII

THE CHILDREN'S SPECIAL SERVICE MISSION

CLARENCE H. M. FOSTER, B.A.

The Foundations. "Wise Masterbuilders."

"Still, all day, the iron wheels go onward,
Grinding life down from its mark;
And the children's souls, which God is calling sunward,
Spin on blindly in the dark."

So wrote Elizabeth Barrett Browning, as she lifted her voice to join the chorus of those whose passionate protest against the hardships and neglect of the little ones eventually produced what Mr G. K. Chesterton has designated the "just and exquisite appreciation of children" that marked the Victorian era. In these enlightened days so much is taken for granted that it requires a very determined effort of the imagination to understand how different were the life and times of the boys and girls of a century ago. Employed from their earliest years in mines and factories, many of them knew little or nothing of the love of God or man, and it is small wonder that the call of the children fell loudly and insistently on the ears of

men and women in varying stations in life, whose hearts God had touched. So, to give an outstanding example, Lord Shaftesbury was raised up to become the champion of the oppressed and exploited little dwellers in the slums, the chimney-sweeps, factory hands, and mine-workers.

Side by side with the reforms that thus gradually came about, uplifting the minds and bodies of the children, there developed an ever-deepening conviction in the hearts of a number of earnest Christian workers that the souls of the children also needed care and training; that boys and girls were capable of understanding and receiving the truths of the love of God. For had not the Saviour Himself exhorted His adult hearers to "become as little children," that in childlike simplicity they might be taught those eternal verities that are yet hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes? The services of the day were long and sombre, and no provision was made for the boys and girls with their love of brightness and their inability to understand the conventional phrases and lengthy words that fell from the lips of the preachers. Even those faithful and persevering workers, the Sunday-school teachers of the day, did not, as a rule, expect any immediate results from their work. They looked, not so much for changed lives as the outcome of the delivery of their carefully-prepared lessons, but rather for the profit which they hoped would result in the lives of scholars if they remembered the lessons when they grew up.

It is true that in our own days there are not wanting those who question whether a child who is old enough to lisp the Name of Jesus is able to learn to love Him. But these doubters are fewer to-day than in the middle of the last century, when a good deal of criticism and opposition had to be encountered and overcome by the band of men who were instrumental in the formation of the Children's Special Service Mission.

To-day we look back over fifty-six years of this work amongst children, and we are able to assert, without any hesitancy whatever, that in scores upon scores of cases boys and girls of all ages and of every class and condition of life have shown unmistakably, by the testimony of life and of lip, that by simple faith in the finished work of the Lord Jesus they have passed "from death unto life," been "born again," "converted," or whatever expression most adequately conveys to the mind that radical change that comes from the unhindered operation of the Spirit of God in a life yielded consciously to Him.

Commencing to Build. "Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work."

The establishment of the Mission was on this wise :—

In the spring of 1867 the Rev. E. Payson Hammond of America visited Scotland for a mission tour, which extended over several months.

He then proceeded to London, where he held services for children and young people in different centres. The first of these was in John Street Chapel, Bedford Row, at the invitation of the Rev. the Hon. Baptist Noel. At this time there was an ardent young Sunday-school teacher, who had charge of about two hundred small children every Sunday afternoon at Salters Hall Chapel, Islington. Hearing of Mr Hammond's meetings at Bedford Row, Mr Josiah Spiers hired a conveyance and took a large number of the children from Islington to the services every night in the week. The outcome of this was the adoption by Mr Spiers of a proposal of Mr Hammond's that special evening services should be established; and a house having been offered for this purpose, Mr Spiers held three Sunday evening meetings there, the first on June 2nd, 1867, being attended by fifteen children. About fifty came on the next Sunday, and the succeeding week there were more than could be accommodated, whereupon Mr Spiers hired a vacant schoolroom close at hand, and soon had a regular congregation of three hundred children every Sunday evening.

Some years afterwards Mr Spiers told a friend that he could remember ten out of the fifteen children who came to the first meeting: nine of them were then Christian workers, and one had died in the Lord.

Thus was planted the seed that was to grow into an organization which God has singularly honoured as a soul-saving agency among the

young, and whose influence as an evangelizing force is to-day felt in the ends of the earth. Mr Josiah Spiers is rightly regarded as the Founder of the C.S.S.M.

God's Building. "Labourers together with God."

But there were others associated with him in these early days, on whose hearts equally rested the burden of the spiritual need of the children. Prayerfully they sought to fulfil their responsibility and clearly were they led of God. Mr Payson Hammond was invited by Newman Hall to conduct a Children's Mission in Surrey Chapel Schools, and the result was a regular Sunday evening children's service conducted by the brothers Samuel and James Tyler. This work attracted the interest of Mr T. B. Bishop, afterwards so well known as the Founder of the Scripture Union, and he associated himself with the Children's Services at Surrey Chapel. Early in 1868 Mr Bishop met Mr Spiers, who invited him and the Messrs Tyler to join the Committee of the newly-formed Children's Special Service Mission. Mr T. J. Hughes, at whose house in Islington the first Sunday evening service had been held, was the Chairman, and Mr Robert Westall, nephew to the well-known Academician, was Secretary. At this same time Mr H. G. D. Wood and Mr Henry Hankinson (later for many years Secretary of the C.S.S.M.) were conducting similar services for children at St Jude's Schools,

Mildmay Park; and when, in June 1868, it was found necessary to pull down the schoolroom in Islington where Mr Spiers was working, the Vicar of St Jude's, the Rev. William Pennefather, invited Mr Spiers to transfer his meetings to St Jude's Schools, where they were amalgamated with those already being held. Here Mr Henry Hankinson became an ardent helper.

Other services of a similar nature were soon in being in other parts of London, and when Mr Bishop joined Mr Westall as Joint-Secretary of the Mission, Mr Pennefather became President.

During the many years that have elapsed the two children's services that formed the nucleus of the C.S.S.M. have been continued regularly, although under different leaders.

Of these early days Mr Bishop once wrote: "I remember one meeting which I attended and which had a great deal to do with deciding me to join in this work. Mr Spiers asked me to conduct a small weekly boys' prayer meeting which had been established nearly a year in Islington. Eight boys were present, and three of these, all under thirteen years of age, engaged in prayer All these three I have known since as earnest Christian workers."

Though by far the greater part of the time and energy of the C.S.S.M. have been expended in the furtherance of such services as those described above and the holding of missions of a similar character in many towns and villages at home and abroad, perhaps no feature of the work of the Mission has attracted more attention or proved

more fruitful in results than the Seaside Services which have been held for many summers in the watering-places round our coasts. The quiet, almost unnoticed, beginning of this work makes romantic reading and has been well told by Mr Bishop, who says :—

"In August 1868, Mr Spiers went for a holiday in Llandudno, and on Wednesday, 26th August, stood watching a group of little ones making mimic gardens by placing pebbles and seaweed on the sand, when the thought occurred to him, 'Why might not these children be making a text of Scripture with their pebbles?' It was the work of a few minutes to run off to the nearest shop and obtain a ball of string and some pegs. 'Who'll help me to write a text?' he said to the nearest group of children. 'I will, I will,' answered a dozen voices, and soon an eager band of volunteers were busily at work. The stakes were fixed in the sand, and a string tied to them so as to make two straight lines, and Mr Spiers began to trace with a spade the words, 'God is Love,' while the children ran off to collect white stones, which they helped him to place so as to form the letters. As the work proceeded, quite a crowd of children and many grown-up people gathered round. Presently the text was finished, but the crowd showed no signs of dispersing. 'What shall we do next?' said the children. Our friend, who had made no preparation for anything further, was rather taken aback, but he ventured to say, 'Shall I tell you a story?' 'O yes, a story! a story!' cried

fifty voices at once. Quickly everyone moved a few yards away from the text, and the children sat down on the sand to listen. When one story was finished, another was called for, and another, and so the first morning passed away. On the next day, directly Mr Spiers appeared on the beach, the children came running up to him as to an old friend. This morning they wrote 'Little children, love one another'; and round the white stones a pretty border was made of green seaweed. Of course more stories again followed, and Mr Spiers then taught the children some simple hymns—'Jesus loves me, this I know,' and 'Shall we gather at the River?' As he had no hymn sheets with him, they had to learn a verse at a time, and then sing it. With a meeting each morning, and the text-writing and plenty of games between whiles, the week passed away. On Saturday came the question, 'What is to be done on Sunday?' With the glad consent of the children, a Service was arranged for the afternoon on the Beach, near the North Parade, and it was forthwith announced from street to street by the Town Crier. When the time came, there was a gathering of three hundred or four hundred children and adults. Mr Spiers stood in a boat, which was filled with children, while the rest stood close around. A little girl brought out a large family Bible for him to read from, and a very happy service was held. The meetings were continued each day during the week following, while Mr Spiers remained at Llandudno. He

made several friends, and they heard with interest of the work that had been commenced in London. After he reached home several encouraging letters came from the children, showing that his first effort on the seashore had not been without fruit."

How great would have been the astonishment of this earnest worker had he realized then that he was the pioneer in a work that has been used of God to the ends of the earth. For a great host of Christian men and women, bishops, clergy, ministers, doctors, nurses, missionaries, occupying positions of all kinds in many fields of evangelism to-day, received their earliest inspirations and spiritual impressions at the seaside services which are now so familiar to thousands of holiday-makers. The red banner of the C.S.S.M. stands as the symbol of a joyful, manly, attractive, presentation of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ which has captured thousands of young lives for His service.

An Habitation of God. "Let every man take heed how he buildeth."

The methods adopted in the work of the C.S.S.M. have been of the simplest.

First and foremost has been the clear sounding of a definite evangelistic note in messages spoken, printed, or sung. Acting on the belief that the conscience may be aroused at a very early age, workers in the C.S.S.M. have endeavoured to declare the whole counsel of God regarding sin's

cause, consequence, and cure. The result has been a wholesome fear of sin and a realization of a need of a Saviour, Who has been early sought and found. Bright, earnest talks have been given, often illustrated by diagram, picture or Bible object. The children have been encouraged to bring their own Bible objects, Bible clocks, or Scripture texts to special services at which these were shown and spoken about. Plenty of singing has proved invaluable in the work and the demand has produced a large number of children's hymns; while the C.S.S.M. "Choruses" are known and loved far and wide, making, as they do, an irresistible appeal to the older folks as well as to the young. Leaflets and books have been issued in many languages other than English, for this work has spread abroad into every continent. These, too, aim at carrying the Gospel message in an attractive and convincing way.

The work which had prospered so abundantly in London quickly became well-known in many parts of the British Isles, attracting ever-growing numbers of men and women whose hearts warmed to this happy service and who placed themselves at the disposal of the Mission to write or speak for the children. Before long it became necessary to take the offices which for so long have been the familiar Headquarters of the Mission—13A Warwick Lane, E.C., under the shadow of St Paul's Cathedral.

The methods adopted at the seaside naturally vary somewhat from these employed in town or

parochial missions. Games are organized and keenly enjoyed; bathing parties, picnics, yachting excursions, sports, all have a very real value as agencies for forging links of friendship between the workers and the young people. Chinese lantern processions, with choruses while on the march and halts for Gospel talks, have attracted many to listen to the message of Him Who is the Light of the world; but every care is taken lest these attractions should become distractions: they are only intended to be vehicles for the presentation of the Gospel to the boys and girls.

After some years of blessing had resulted in the conversion of many boys and girls, there arose the question of consolidating the work. If these new-born babes in Christ were to grow they needed "the sincere milk of the Word"; yet clearly they must have guidance in the choice and planning of systematic reading. Thus it was that in 1879 Mr T. B. Bishop founded the Scripture Union, which took root and flourished from its earliest days. Short portions of Scripture are arranged for every day in the year and explanatory notes are published. Three quarters of a million readers are banded together, reading God's Work in fifty languages.

A staff of missioners labours all the year round in the towns and villages of our land, visiting churches, chapels, and schools, and entering many open doors. The summer seaside work is carried on almost entirely by voluntary workers and this leads to the mention of one development in the

work which could scarcely have been foreseen by the originators of the C.S.S.M. The fact that these seaside gatherings draw together those who are able to leave the cities and towns for a holiday at the sea means that it is very largely what are called "the better classes" who are influenced. In this way large numbers of boys and girls from Public Schools have been reached and won for Christ. And they, in their turn, have passed on to the Universities and have become active workers themselves, returning to the seaside to assist in the work there. Strangely strong has been the attractiveness of this work to undergraduates of Oxford and Cambridge particularly. Dr Handley Moule, the late Bishop of Durham, once delivered a most striking address on "The Influence of the C.S.S.M. on the Manhood of England as shown at the Universities," in which he paid eloquent tribute to the work of the Mission which had, in his opinion, acted not only as an evangelizing agency amongst many hundreds of those who had later entered Universities, but had also provided a training ground for earnest young workers who were just commencing their public work and ministry. So it has proved.

Many Camps and House Parties have also come into being as a result of the seaside work. These Camps have proved not only popular but full of opportunities for personal evangelistic work. Latterly Swiss Winter Sports Camps have been held with marked success. The fact that "officers" and boys are thrown together so much

means that friendship quickly ripens, confidences are exchanged and young lives led to Him Who is able to save and to keep.

All this work has from the beginning been interdenominational; and it has been the privilege and joy of the C.S.S.M. to find itself one of those links between the various companies of Christians that manifest in action that those who love and serve a common Lord and Master are "all one in Christ Jesus."

Overseas the work has spread. In addition to many branches of the Scripture Union in every continent, there are C.S.S.M. agents at work in India, Japan, Korea, Australia, Canada, France, and other countries, while extensive developments are being planned for the work in China and elsewhere.

"*It fell not; for it was founded upon a Rock.*"
"Since that time even until now hath it been in building, and yet it is not finished."

The present position and prospects are, thank God, very bright and encouraging. From many quarters, at home and abroad, come requests for help; and the staff is inadequate to respond to those clamant calls. At no time has there been more genuine enthusiasm in the Universities and elsewhere over the work of the C.S.S.M. on the beach and in the camp. Indeed it has now become urgently necessary to organize a special 'Varsity and Public Schools Camps branch of the Mission. Closely allied to this is the work

of the Crusaders' Union and Girls' Crusaders' Union, affiliated with the C.S.S.M., which conduct weekly Bible Classes, with ancillary efforts, amongst thousands of Public School boys and girls week by week.

The Caravan Mission to Village Children, another department of the C.S.S.M., employs a band of workers who constantly report blessing in the many places visited by the fourteen Caravans. Whilst the Home Staff Workers are able thankfully to record continuously the blessing of God upon their labours in the salvation of many young people up and down our land, and the increasingly bright outlook and opportunity afforded by the work.

. . . . . .

This much has God taught clearly through the fifty-six years' experience of the C.S.S.M.; that He honours the faithful presentation of His Word in the true conversion of children; that there is no need to teach children vaguely about the truths of Christianity, but that definite decisions may be expected and witnessed; that when children are encouraged to persevere in the regular reading of the Bible they do acquire a love and reverence for it and a knowledge of it that stands them in good stead in after-life; that calls for life-service at home or abroad have often come to children of quite tender years; and that children who are trained, sheltered, nourished and watched over do become earnest consecrated men and women.

An old Scotch farmer, who had a remarkably fine flock of sheep, was one day asked why they were in such splendid condition. His significant reply was, "I aye take care of the lambs." And to us to-day comes the voice of the Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, saying, "Feed My lambs."

CHAPTER VIII

THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

Sir Arthur K. Yapp, K.B.E.

The evangelical revival of the eighteenth century was the mainspring of great social and philanthropic movements carrying the implications of the Gospel into practical affairs. An "enthusiasm for humanity" was kindled, which issued in great efforts to improve the lot and situation of the unfortunate masses of the people. Sunday school; the visitation of Prisons by John Howard and Elizabeth Fry; the reform of the Criminal Law; the abolition of slavery; the humanizing of the conditions of industry; the creation of great Missionary Societies, such as the London Missionary and Church Missionary Societies, the British and Foreign Bible Society — all these are practical expressions of the Christian Gospel put to work. They were fruits of the evangelical revival. And in this connection comes the founding and extension of the Y.M.C.A. Emerson remarked that "an institution is but the length and shadow of one man, as the Reformation of Luther, the Methodism of Wesley,

and the Abolition of Clark." Were Emerson on earth now he could add, "the Y.M.C.A. of George Williams," for the Association is literally his child, and, because George Williams was deeply imbued with the evangelical spirit, the Movement he created, under God, bears the same impress.

The roots of the Y.M.C.A. run back into the early life of George Williams. As a youth he came under the influence of the evangelical movement, experienced a conversion of the old-fashioned sort, and at once, with evangelical fervour, set about winning his associates for Jesus Christ. From these springs the Y.M.C.A. took its rise. Born in 1821 at Dulverton in Somerset, the "second birth" of George Williams took place in Bridgewater one Sunday evening towards the end of 1837. A year before, to quote his own words later, he had "entered Bridgewater a careless, thoughtless, Godless, swearing young fellow. I learnt at Bridgewater to see the vital importance, the tremendous importance of the spiritual life. I saw in this town two roads, the downward road and the upward road. . . . I was on the downward road. I saw that this road would certainly lead me to spend my eternity with the devil and his angels, and I said, 'Cannot I escape? Is there no escape?' They told me in this very town of Bridgewater how to escape—'confess your sins, accept Christ, trust in Him, yield your heart to the Saviour.'" The language has the authentic

flavour of the evangelical movement. Its phrases are reminiscent of Bunyan and the Puritans.

The ensuing activity of the young convert followed the passionate evangelistic model of Wesley and Whitefield. At once George Williams set about winning converts among his fellow-apprentices in the drapery establishment at Bridgewater. Twenty-seven of them were won for Christ by the lad of seventeen, and the Prayer Meetings and Bible Classes he started in the business-house were henceforth typical features of the Y.M.C.A. Movement which he started six years later in 1844 at the drapery establishment in St Paul's Churchyard, whither he had come as an assistant. In this house, the premises of Messrs Hitchcock & Rogers, George Williams carried on the passionate quest for converts that had fired him at Bridgewater, and besides winning the head of the firm had gained nearly fifty of his fellow-workers in the establishment.

The genesis of the Y.M.C.A. took place among the shop-assistants in the drapery business. At that time the assistants "lived in." Among them Williams found a couple who prayed. For mutual comfort and help in living the Christian life in an atmosphere far from Christian, the young zealots gathered for prayer in a bedroom, watched for souls with sleepless zeal and sought conversions. The methods pursued were largely shaped by the writings of C. G. Finney, the revivalist. His chief work, *Lectures on Revivals of Religion,* was used as a textbook. The biographer of Sir George

Williams, Sir J. E. Hodder Williams, declares that "to those printed lectures by Finney are certainly due much of the zeal and passion which produced the Y.M.C.A. . . . In Finney's book you will find the secret, not only of George William's assurance of faith, but also of his absorbing passion for souls and for the work that wins souls."

At the end of May 1844 George Williams was walking across Blackfriars Bridge, London, with a friend, one Edward Beaumont, whose son is still prominently connected with the Y.M.C.A. in Oxford, and asked him if he were "prepared to make a sacrifice for Christ." The reply being favourable, the plan was unfolded of introducing religious services into every large drapery establishment in London. On June 6th a meeting was called in Williams' bedroom at 72 St Paul's Churchyard, and twelve persons were present in the little upper room, and there and then was founded the Young Men's Christian Association.

The new movement from the outset had the support of the evangelical Churches. It was noted that the original twelve founders of the Association consisted in equal numbers of members of the Church of England, the Baptist, Congregational and Methodist Churches, an interdenominational feature which has ever since characterized the Movement.

It was early realized that it was not enough for the Association to aim at conversion alone.

Suitable environment must be provided in which the Christian life could be trained and developed. Counter-attraction was needed against the enticements of the saloon and drinking-hall — a centre where morally inclined young men could rally and find congenial companionships, which under Christian auspices might lead them to Christ.

There gradually dawned the conviction that the function of the Association was to provide for the spiritual, intellectual, and social needs of all young men, and in North America the provision for physical development was introduced and buildings erected to provide for a programme as rich and diversified as human nature itself. In Chicago and New York the work was developed on different lines and these two centres came to stand for two ideals of Y.M.C.A. work, which still persist within the Movement to-day: on the one hand, the emphasis has been laid on evangelism pure and simple, with revivalistic methods; on the other, and this is largely due to the influence of the late Robert M'Burney of New York, the work has been regarded as primarily a specialized work for young men, including evangelism, but training every aspect of the man's nature for Christ. For ten years or more the friendly contest took place in North America, and to-day the latter view is rapidly coming to supremacy in all parts of the world. As the point is important for understanding the change of emphasis as regards general evangelism in the Y.M.C.A. during recent years, it is of interest to note that Mr Moody, who was himself a product

of the Association and had held the Chicago Secretaryship, as an evangelist continued to help the growth and development of the Movement. It is said that in America and Great Britain he raised money for the erection of more buildings for the Y.M.C.A. than has been raised by any other single individual. Speaking in 1879 at the American International Convention at Baltimore, Mr Moody delivered remarks of great value to all evangelists. In answer to the question, "What agencies should the Association use?" he said, "There are many ways of reaching young men. I would recommend the gymnasium, classes, medical lectures, social receptions, music, and all unobjectionable agencies. These are for week-days. We do not want simply evangelistic meetings. I have tried that method in Association work and failed, so I gave it up and became an evangelist." He considered the great need of the Association to be "more trained Secretaries and more Training Schools. Every Secretary ought to be training suitable young men for Secretaries, but a man cannot be an evangelist and a General Secretary without spoiling his work in both."

Evangelistic Principles. Times have changed since the time of Sir George Williams and D. L. Moody, and the Y.M.C.A. has moved with the times. It could not have been otherwise with a living movement. But the great foundation principles of the Association remain as they were in the days of the Founder. It has not drifted from its ancient moorings. In 1924 as in 1844, it

regards the winning of young men and boys for the Lord Jesus Christ as its primary work. It is still essentially a layman's movement, and its objective is found in those "other sheep"—the 80 per cent. who are out of touch with any form of organized religion.

Tested in a Great Emergency—the Evangelistic Work of the Y.M.C.A. in the Great War.

In 1913-14 the English National Council was making preparations on a large scale for what was known as a "Christian Manhood Campaign," and efforts were being made to secure the co-operation of other religious organizations in a concerted attempt to evangelize the young men of the United Kingdom. The War upset all these arrangements, but, at the same time, presented the Association with what was described by a distinguished Scottish preacher, who worked with the Y.M.C.A. during the War, as "the greatest spiritual opportunity in history." The head of one of our greatest British Universities spoke of the Association in the War as the "Hindenburg Line of the Christian Faith," and a well-known minister, returning to his home in the North of England after a spell of Association service on the Flanders front, wrote of the work as he had seen it, as that of "character-building at a time when it was very difficult to retain high ideals; moral reconstruction in the midst of destruction."

Of course, the Y.M.C.A. had to face the fire of criticism during these tragic years. To some its

programme was too narrow ; to others it was too broad ; some thought it too religious, and others not religious enough. It was perfectly obvious that if it was to do a national work, it was essential that that work should be administered on broad lines, and that the Association should, in the highest sense of the term, become "all things to all men, that it might by all means save some." To Jews and Roman Catholics, as well as to Anglicans and Free Churchmen, it extended the hospitality of its huts, and allowed any official chaplains to minister to the spiritual needs of their own men in their own way ; and, as a result, the Association had the friendship of all, and, in the majority of cases, their active and effective co-operation. In the case of the Indian troops, permission was long withheld owing to what it was believed would be a serious religious difficulty in India, but ultimately the Association was allowed to extend its service to the Indian soldiers, though only on condition that there should be no evangelistic work or religious work of any kind. The service was gladly rendered, the confidence of the Indians entirely won, and immense possibilities of post-war evangelism opened up.

The Association leaders believe that a cup of cold water or hot coffee, as the case may be, if provided in the name of the Master, may be a religious sacrament and a spiritual service.

The Y.M.C.A. had a threefold opportunity for evangelistic work during the War, viz., in the

Home Camps, in the Base Camps overseas, and on the various fighting fronts.

In the Home Camps the importance and magnitude of the opportunity can scarcely be exaggerated. The flower of the young manhood of the British Empire was concentrated in the great Camps which were opened up all over the country. The men were peculiarly impressionable and eager to hear the Christian message. In addition to the whole-time service of members of its own staff, evangelists like Gipsy Smith, the Rev. John M'Neil, Mr W. R. Lane, Mr S. E. Burrow and many others gave their whole time to the work. Several memorable meetings were conducted by Dr Chapman and Mr Alexander, and hundreds of clergymen, ministers and laymen who had never regarded themselves as evangelists became effective in that type of work. Large and enthusiastic meetings were held night by night in Camps all over the country, and many thousands professed to give their hearts to God.

In the Base Camps overseas the opportunity was equally great, not only in France, but in India, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Salonica, and later in Turkey, the Balkans, and in Russia. The troops were often detained in the Camps for months while their training was completed. Huge Rest Camps were provided, where thousands of men at a time could get temporary relief from the horrors of the battlefield, and in all these Camps the men never knew the hour when they might be ordered to the front. They had little else to do,

and hardly anywhere to go but the Y.M.C.A. There was no striving after effect in the way the religious message was presented. The men could understand it, and it appealed to them.

Family Prayers were conducted in nearly every Y.M.C.A. centre at home and abroad practically every evening, with a brief evangelistic message usually included. In most of the Huts in the big Base Camps, at least one organized week-night meeting was held, and some of those meetings had an average attendance of from four hundred to six hundred men. Apart from an organized effort, the method of informal approach was encouraged, and specially selected speakers would often get up and deliver a brief message "straight from the shoulder," as it were, in a crowded Hut. This was never resented by the men, but invariably came in for a full share of applause.

At the Front. Evangelistic effort right up at the front and among the reserve trenches was quite a different proposition, and much more difficult; but a great deal was accomplished. There was an immense amount of personal evangelism, supplemented by little meetings in dug-outs and cellars, by Y.M.C.A. workers, often elderly ministers; whilst a number of well-known evangelists and preachers co-operated and always served as well at the front.

The War Roll. More than a quarter of a million men signed the War Roll, a simple declaration of faith approved by chaplains and representatives

of the Churches, and introduced by the Rev. W. E. Soothill, at that time one of the Secretaries of the Y.M.C.A. Religious Work Department, which reads as follows :—

> " I hereby pledge my allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour and King, and by God's help will fight His battles for the Victory of His Kingdom."

Post-War Evangelistic Work of the Y.M.C.A.

The period immediately following the Armistice has been admittedly difficult for all forms of evangelistic work. There was an inevitable reaction when the strain of war was relieved. A young farmer, a member of a Red Triangle Club in the Midlands, discussing with a friend a series of remarkable meetings that had been held in the Hut a short time ago, put it tersely, thus : " During the War we had no time to think about anything but of winning the War. After the Armistice we tried to forget the War, and thought of nothing but amusement and enjoyment ; now we need something else." And that seems to be a fairly general experience. In the Young Men's Christian Association we have not been able to concentrate on evangelistic effort as we should like to have done, because our time has been so fully occupied with the demobilization of our huge War Work Organization and with problems of finance. In the meantime, there has been rapid

extension of the Movement all over the country, and we have found it impossible to demobilize a great deal of our War work, particularly in regard to Germany and, until recently, Constantinople. In the villages, where we have now 284 centres, it has been very difficult to secure local leadership as far as any form of religious activity is concerned ; but the trend is altogether in the right direction, and, from time to time, Headquarters has taken the opportunity of re-emphasizing the position of the Y.M.C.A. as a Movement for evangelistic work.

The very fact that young fellows are constantly moving from place to place, and that the average Y.M.C.A. member does not stay more than three years in the same town, and thus that the membership is constantly changing, gives the Y.M.C.A. a unique opportunity of influencing the youth of the country as it passes through the ranks of the Association. The office of the Y.M.C.A. Secretary provides a daily opportunity for personal evangelism, which many of our men are not slow to take. The Boys' Department is also a fruitful field for evangelistic effort, and this is particularly applicable to the Summer Holiday Camps.

Evangelism on a large scale is carried on in the summer months in the Territorial Training Camps, where the men are always ready to listen to a speaker who has a message. This also applies to the big Military Camps, such as those on Salisbury Plain, and to many of the Barracks where the Association is still operating.

The evangelistic opportunity of the Y.M.C.A. is not by any means confined to the United Kingdom. Valuable post-war work has been carried on among the troops in Germany and the Hon. Montagu Waldegrave and others have found an "open door" for evangelism in Yugo-Slavia, while the American Y.M.C.A. has carried on a similar work in other European countries. From India comes the news of several remarkably successful missions held under Y.M.C.A. auspices by the Rev. Dr Stanley Jones. Dr John R. Mott, the leader of the American Movement, has conducted a successful series of conferences and evangelistic meetings in several of the most important cities of North America. Dr Sherwood Eddy and others have found Japan and China open to the Gospel Message as never before.

The Chinese genius for organization has been seen not only in the organization of evangelistic campaigns, but still more in the follow-up work. Dr Eddy, writing at the close of a recent visit to China, said that in each of the last three cities visited he had found no fewer than 1600 young men (Chinese) enrolled in the Bible Study Classes of the Y.M.C.A.

Work on quite different lines is being carried on in Y.M.C.A. centres operated for ex-Service men in London, notably in the Waterloo Hut, where evangelistic addresses are given to large crowds of men every week: also in such personal work as "The League of the Straight Road," where one voluntary lady worker is giving her life for

sixty-five young fellows, whom she has won from what might easily have developed into a career of crime. The services organized for members of the League are very striking gatherings.

Methods of the Y.M.C.A. Evangelism. The aim of the Y.M.C.A. is to relate religion to the every-day life of men and boys and to the problems of the day. Its objective, as already stated, is the eighty per cent. outside the Churches. It is not a Church, neither does it adopt the methods of the Churches for reaching men. It is a kind of half-way house, a communication trench, and seeks to lead men into the fellowship of the Churches. It cultivates methods of informal approach. Each Association adopts its own plans for reaching men, and amongst the methods of work generally used may be mentioned the following: Personal evangelism; Men's Meetings of from fifty to a hundred, also, in some cases, the Brotherhood type of Meeting, with much larger attendances; Lantern Lectures; Popular Sunday Evening Meetings in Music-Halls or Cinemas—music and singing are usually an important feature of such gatherings; Open-air Meetings; Special Meetings for Boys in hall and in camp; Informal Evangelistic Meetings in the Military Camps and United Missions, in which the Y.M.C.A. usually takes the initiative and is responsible for the organization. At a recent "Manhood Campaign," conducted by Mr J. J. Virgo, in Bournemouth, practically all the Churches in the town united, and the Meetings for Men Only ran to an attendance

of nearly one thousand. Conferences with young men on religious problems; lounge talks, and Sunday afternoon tea-table conferences, always conclude with a brief message. In all its evangelistic efforts the Y.M.C.A. seeks practical results—conversion, temperance, purity of life, and the inculcation of high ideals of life and service.

Plans for the Future

It is always more easy to speak about what has already been accomplished than of plans one hopes to carry out in the future, but it may be said here that it is the dream and also the aim and determination of the leaders of the Y.M.C.A. that the Message of Jesus for our time shall be taken, as far as possible, to *every* man and boy. There is an opportunity of influencing the young men and boys of the present generation.

Y.M.C.A. plans for evangelistic work under post-war conditions are passing beyond the experimental stage, and for the coming year we hope, amongst other things—

1. To organize inspirational conferences for young men, and group missions in different parts of the country, also to organize retreats and meetings for the deepening of the spiritual life, primarily, for the members of the Association.

2. To seek a nucleus in each Association, Red Triangle Club, and unoccupied town, through whom we can carry on our programme for the extension of our Lord's Kingdom amongst young

men, also to enrol and train in every place a group of young men keen on evangelism, and to secure and train laymen for Christian service.

3. To enrol at Headquarters and in the Divisions a panel of speakers possessing evangelistic gifts, so that we may be in a position to supply acceptable speakers whenever needed.

4. To organize a course of evangelistic meetings in centres in and around the Metropolitan area, also in the City of London, and to relate this effort to the great Empire gathering which is to take place in London this year in connection with the British Empire Exhibition.

5. To organize special evangelistic campaigns in the crowded industrial districts of the North of England and in the populous valleys of South Wales.

6. To concentrate in preparation and follow-up, by the formation of Prayer Circles and Bible Study Groups, and by promoting a campaign for the daily devotional reading of the Bible.

7. To facilitate the signing of a new "War Roll" decision card.

8. To encourage overseas evangelism in countries like India, the West Indies, and other parts of the British Empire, and in the regions beyond.

9. To continue and develop evangelistic work amongst the men of H.M. Forces at home and overseas.

Concerning the Past and the Present

Whenever possible, at the close of more formal meetings, I get the younger men to remain for

informal conference. I usually put to them a number of very definite questions, and always find them ready enough to talk on matters concerning morality, temperance, religion, and spiritual experience. Comparatively few, alas ! are in the habit of attending church or chapel regularly—some because they doubt the truth of the Bible, but many more because they had a chilly reception when they did attend, or because they doubt the sincerity of the people who do attend. One young business man told me a few days ago that he thought much of the preaching of to-day was too academic, and there was an air of unreality about it. To him many clergy and ministers have no living contact with the vital issues and with the ordinary problems men have to face day by day. He found little real help from the services he did attend, yet he was convinced men were thinking more deeply of religious things than ever before, and it was easy to strike a responsive chord. The vast majority of young men are untouched by any form of organized religion ; and was it not for that very reason that Sir George Williams in 1844 founded the Young Men's Christian Association ?

CHAPTER IX

THE STUDENT CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT

Rev. Tissington Tatlow, M.A.

The evangelistic motive has been from the first central to the life of the Student Christian Movement, but the attention of its founders—a group of students representing Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Dublin Universities, also University College, Aberystwyth—was concentrated not upon the evangelization of their fellow students but upon the evangelization of the world. Their desire to promote Christ's cause in the non-Christian world by drawing large numbers of university men and women to the mission field led to the formation of the Student Volunteer Missionary Union in 1892, with its declaration of membership: "It is my promise, if God permit, to become a foreign missionary." An attempt to carry this declaration to the entire student class throughout the British Isles at once revealed the fact that the majority of students were studying in institutions upon a secular basis, and that practically none of these institutions included amongst the students' societies any religious organization. The result

of this was also clear, namely, that there was a very decided drift away from Christianity even in the case of those students who came from Christian homes. Students are always rapid in action when once they are convinced that a certain course is desirable, and within a year we find the leaders of the Student Volunteer Missionary Union deciding upon a campaign to found Christian Unions in all the Colleges of the country. By the middle of 1893 they had created a new organization to federate these Christian Unions, the object of which was "to deepen the spiritual life of those students who are already Christians and to extend the Kingdom of Christ to others." A few years later the Student Volunteer Missionary Union and the federation of Christian Unions combined, drew in the theological colleges and became the Student Christian Movement of Great Britain and Ireland.

The Student Movement has grown in numbers and in the variety of its interests—Bible, social, and missionary study, the fostering of international relationships, hostels, clubs, and publishing—but it has never changed its main centres of interest; foreign missions and evangelistic work remain to this day the two foci of all its life and work.

The Movement began on a very small scale. It was very uphill work in the modern Civic Universities bringing Christian Unions into existence. Travelling secretaries, who were graduates never more than a year or two removed from their own student days, pioneered these unions, which as a

rule began with half a dozen to a dozen men or women who met for prayer and Bible study and who sought by personal influence aided by occasional general meetings, usually very small—twelve to twenty persons—to win their fellow students for Christ. They had little hope of influencing the whole college or university, but they believed some could be won, and some were brought into the study circles and won for Christ.

Personal work by individuals for individuals has always been the basis of all effective evangelistic work in the colleges. At times the students have talked about it a good deal as a method, and have arranged addresses and produced literature to stimulate and direct it, at others little has been said about it and few attempts made to promote it, but it has never ceased. This work grows out of friendship. Students are friendly people and anxious and ready to help one another, and if spiritual need is felt by some there are always others who are anxious to try and help to meet it.

Dr John R. Mott certainly knows more about students than any other man now living, and he has remarked that "the very nature, purpose, and spirit of a university education predisposes a man to consider honestly the truth, no matter from what quarter it comes," and it is because of this that he is able to add, "statistics collected in Japan and India, as well as in the West, clearly prove that this is true, and that a much larger proportion of students are Christians than any other class of young men."

But this end is not reached without much travail of mind and spirit. A man (or woman) enters college at seventeen to eighteen years of age ; up to that time he has had very little liberty of thought or action. He has been set lessons to learn, required to submit to fairly strict discipline and has probably spent his leisure playing games. Now all is changed. He is in a new atmosphere, the college lecturer is a very different person from the schoolmaster, he is often interested exclusively in the subject he teaches and very little in his pupils. From the religious point of view he may be either Christian, agnostic, or a sceptic. There are few students who do not find very contradictory attitudes towards the meaning of the world held by the different teachers whose lectures they attend. Further, the student is freer than ever before, rules are few, and detachment from non-student circles is considerable, even in the case of non-residential colleges, and he can live his own life. His home folk know very little about him, and at college he goes his own way so long as he passes his examinations. The result of new knowledge, the variety of points of view held amongst his teachers, greater freedom and the necessity of choosing for himself, is stimulation, strain, and a good deal of perplexity. The student often seeks relief in talk. Students discuss everything in heaven and on earth among themselves. At times much of the discussion is about things on earth, but as friendship ripens heavenly things are discussed ; and sometimes in

common rooms and in corridors, religion is discussed with a frankness that would surprise other classes of people.

It will be seen at once that the student who is a convinced Christian with something to give has an almost unbounded opportunity for helping fellow students. And no one who knows the universities of this land from the inside can withhold their admiration for the hundreds of men and women, most of them barely twenty years of age, who toil and talk and pray over the spiritual perplexities and needs of their friends. Then the Christian student has his own troubles. There are very few indeed who do not pass through deep waters while at college. The task of acquiring new knowledge, relating it to what has already been acquired, thinking it into some kind of unity and relating the whole to his Christian view of God and man and the world is what the student has to face whether he is fully conscious of it or not. And there is hardly a Christian man, or woman, to be found who does not carry on his work for Christ in college against the background of a continual intellectual struggle in his own life. Those who have no difficulties of this kind, but accept a fixed body of Christian truth without thinking about it, may and do, on account of their devotion and sincerity exercise a Christian influence, but its range is limited and while helping some they often give the impression to the general student body that Christians are unwilling to face truth and afraid to think about it.

The main impression of the close observer of college life is of a perfect welter of perplexity, questioning and tension, a widespread desire for help, and a readiness to take it from anyone whose intellectual honesty and Christian character the students can respect.

This outline of the atmosphere of college life and the frame of mind of the average student was necessary if the conditions of evangelistic work among students are to be understood.

Turning back to study the methods of the Student Movement, if personal work has come first in producing results, as I believe it has, and is the oldest method of evangelism in the Movement, another method has been the college mission. This method was adopted by senior men in the attempt to reach students on a few occasions prior to the rise of the Student Christian Movement as when D. L. Moody visited Cambridge forty years ago, and was followed by Henry Drummond, who carried on a mission for nine years to the students of Edinburgh, but it was not until about 1904 that students themselves began to promote missions on any scale. What led to their adoption was the growing strength of the Christian Unions and with this the dawning of a hope in the case of a number of them that they might not only reach individual students but could influence the whole life of the college or university. This hope made the method of personal work and occasional general meetings seem inadequate; the whole subject received a great deal of attention at the

summer conferences of the Movement and on its General Committee, the outcome being a series of evangelistic missions which began in 1904, and which have been carried on ever since, periodically as regards each college, and annually as regards the whole Movement. In 1904 missions were held in Edinburgh University, University College, London, and St Bartholomew's Hospital Medical School. In 1908 Dr Mott took missions in Oxford, Cambridge, and London, while there is a record of special evangelistic efforts in Manchester, Bristol, Cardiff, Dublin, Belfast, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and St Andrew's Universities. Thousands of students attended these meetings and the results were evident.

Early in this same year, the General Committee of the Movement had appointed a Commission consisting of a dozen of its leaders to survey its entire work and advise on policy, its chairman being J. H. Oldham, who has since become famous in the foreign missionary world. This Commission declared that, "the primary aim of the Movement is *evangelistic*," and that it was not satisfactorily accepted nor could it be achieved until "the General Committee, each Christian Union and each member is consciously committed to the carrying out of this aim as both a corporate and individual responsibility—involved in personal loyalty to Jesus Christ." It pointed out as lines of advance; the need to find Evangelists and among them "some specially qualified to meet intellectual difficulties"; the importance of giving

the exposition of the evangelistic aim of the Movement a primary place at the summer conference; the importance of special evangelistic work to reach freshmen or new students; the need for help and encouragement to students to do personal work; and the need for special literature on the whole subject. These recommendations fell on prepared soil and bore fruit, and evangelistic work, including college missions, steadily increased up to the outbreak of the War in 1914. During the war special missions ceased, but in the women's colleges and among the few men left, the work still went on chiefly through study circles, discussion groups, single meetings and personal influence.

After the War, evangelistic missions began again at once with great vigour. The Annual Report of the Movement for the academic year 1919-1920 records that missions were held "in order to bring the claims of Christ before the whole student body . . . in Manchester, Nottingham, University College, London, Oxford, Cambridge, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberystwyth, Cardiff, Belfast, and Dublin." Probably 7000 to 8000 students attended these missions. The results varied; "two were practically failures while, of the remainder, some were moderately and others highly successful." The Annual Report quoted above contains an interesting paragraph summarizing the situation in the colleges and showing the kind of advice the leaders were offering to the Unions. It runs as follows :—

"A careful study of the situation which the Christian Unions report that they have to face shows that there are four factors which recur again and again. The first is 'indifference.' A number of Christian Unions are impressed with the large section of students who appear indifferent to Christianity. Whether this is a very profound diagnosis, we are inclined to doubt. Wherever a sustained effort has been made to arrest the attention of a university by the presentation of the Gospel of Christ, as in the case of Cambridge, it has not been men's indifference but their interest which has been notable. When students are really put to the test a remarkably small number are found to be indifferent to Christianity. We have to remember that the present generation has become accustomed to violent stimuli and will not attend to a lukewarm effort to present Christianity to them. Nothing is easier than for a Christian Union to write down as due to indifference lack of response to a not very vital policy. On the other hand, it would not be right to ignore the very great difficulties of the non-residential universities in this respect. In the rush of travel and the crowded curriculum, hundreds of students have literally no time for Christian propaganda, and it is next to impossible to apply the necessary violent stimulus. So the crust of indifference is never broken through. The second difficulty the Christian Unions declare they have to cope with is the existence of intellectual difficulties. There can be no question

but that this is the case. Because of the way in which Christianity has been presented to them, because it has not been presented at all, or because of the general lack of religious conviction, it is not surprising that many students have difficulties. They are difficulties which nothing will resolve save an adequate presentation of the Christian view of God and the world, calculated to appeal alike to the intellect, emotions, and will. The third difficulty which has been stressed is ignorance of Christianity. It is a pitiable fact that very large numbers of students enter college without any clear or true conception of what Christianity is. The fourth difficulty is akin to the one already named—the distaste for religion created by wrong school or home training. We find appeals to men to become disciples of Christ of little value apart from careful and systematic teaching as to the true nature of Christianity and its demands."

Although the two foci of the Student Christian Movement remain unshifted by the War, and evangelistic work and foreign missions are still its two most fundamental concerns, there is a considerable change in the background against which our work is done. To the pre-war students the world seemed a secure and desirable place, while the student of to-day is deeply affected—more so than his seniors—by the insecurity, suffering, and uncertainty of human life. Also, there has been a break away from traditional religious language, and Christian students have been forced to clothe their message in untechnical

language. The word "Evangel" and its cognates are never used now by students. To them the evangelist is pre-eminently a man who makes a fervent appeal to the emotions. They seldom connect him in their thoughts with Christ and His Gospel. The need of a word to take the place of "evangelistic" has been met by the word "campaign." It is a poor word but it serves its purpose, and when it is announced that the Christian Union is going to have a campaign there is no doubt in anyone's mind as to what is meant—the Christian Union is going to hold what before the War it would have called an evangelistic mission.

The phraseology in which the Gospel of Christ is presented to students is of great importance. To the great mass of them theological terms mean little or nothing. Taken as we meet them in the mass in the Student Christian Movement the majority would find little meaning in words and phrases like "Justification by faith," "Sanctification," and "Grace." It is a fairly constant demand that Christianity be expounded in untheological language. There is a great deal of ignorance mixed up with a good deal of prejudice on this subject of phraseology. It has been so for a very long time. Henry Drummond's work owed some of its success to the fact that he forsook the traditional phrases in which preachers were in the habit of presenting the Gospel and used untechnical language in the theological sense, while, on the other hand, he borrowed scientific terms

freely, in which to clothe his message. It has been the practice of all successful speakers to students since his day to follow his example and use the vocabulary to which the student is accustomed in the class rooms to convey the truths of the Gospel to his hearers.

The successful evangelist to students must be something of an apologist. Since his audience is composed of those whose main preoccupation is with things of the mind, intellectual questions and difficulties bulk very large, and the evangelist has to be ready to give a reason, in season and out of season, for the faith that is in him. In private talks, in discussion groups, and in large missions alike, it is essential that Christianity be presented as the truth about God, and as a way of life which can be understood and which can be related to all the knowledge the student has so far acquired. The nature of personality, personality in relation to God, the Divinity of Christ, the validity of religious experience, the nature of faith, the meaning of atonement, the rationale of prayer, the relation of religion to science and to art are topics that must be dealt with again and again and with knowledge.

But the missioner to students who confines himself to the rôle of apologist, while he may awaken immense interest, is a failure. It is essential that he pass on from apologetics, which is really only the art of clearing a space to his main business, that of preaching the Gospel—the good news that men may be so joined to Christ

by faith in Him, that their inner life is re-created and they become new men: for students come short of what God means life to be and they know it. Masses of them long for a life which is more unified, disciplined, effective, and lofty than that they have achieved, while numbers crave for victory over sins of body or spirit. Once the missioner has convinced them he is honest in his attitude to truth as such, and after he has perhaps resolved some particular difficulty they have puzzled over they are ready for him to go on, tell them what Christ requires of them and call them to decide to become His disciples.

Again, an individualistic gospel is not likely to touch students widely. The desire to help others, to serve, to assist in building a better world has a tremendous appeal to students and a call to them to help in this wins a ready response, and it is only after this response has been made in a measure that they begin to think of themselves and their need of help if they are to be any use to others. The missioner must take cognizance of this vivid social consciousness and declare what Christianity has to say about the redemption of society and the world before he begins to talk of the need for personal salvation—if he does not he will fail to reach his hearers.

It is vital to success that anything in the nature of a deliberate appeal to the emotions be avoided. Students are intense and excitable and have a kind of protective fear of "being had." They may respond to an emotional appeal at the time,

but the reaction comes very quickly, and with it irritation and disgust. The most effective missioners almost all adopt a conversational tone in giving their addresses and discard all attempts, whether by singing or other methods, at working up their audiences. It often seems cold at the time to older people, but there is plenty of hidden feeling, and the results approve the method. But numbers of students attending missions and thronging the missioner's rooms all day is not the only method used as well as personal work. A great deal is done by drawing men and women who are not convinced Christians into apologetic discussion groups, circles for the study of Christian doctrine and Bible study circles. Thousands of wavercrs and undecided people are reached by this method, and the Movement gives much time and thought to the production of literature to guide such groups, and also to the training of leaders for them—this is usually done at special study schools, lasting from three to five days.

Conference is another method used with success. The summer conferences held at Swanwick, while they aim at building up the spiritual life of Christians and preparing them for service at home and abroad, always contain a very considerable evangelistic element. At least one morning session daily and several of the evening meetings are designed to remove difficulties and win students to whole-hearted discipleship to Christ, and as a matter of fact thousands of students past and present would affirm, without hesitation, that the

greatest experience in their lives has been attendance at a summer conference, while a large proportion of these would say it had been the occasion of their definitely deciding to follow Christ.

Literature has been used to some extent, but reading is a weak spot in the habits of the average student, he reads too little and will not tackle the bigger books which might help him. Some of the books, however, which the Student Christian Movement have published, notably those by Dr Fosdick, Dr T. R. Glover, and Dr Herbert Gray, have had a wide circulation among students, and have influenced not a few for Christ.

In view of the amount of space devoted to missions or campaigns it seems advisable to make it clear that in the Student Movement we regard evangelism as something which is cumulative, the result of a process. A mission planted upon a college, even with a first-class missioner, is not likely in our experience to be successful unless the college is ready for it. The leaders of the Movement put this point well in a document prepared for an Archbishop's Committee in 1917, and no experience since invalidates a word of what they wrote :—

"We find in the colleges that accessibility to the Christian message on the part of the general body of students depends almost entirely on the Christian Union. If the fruits of the spirit are being manifested in the lives of Christian Union members a very large proportion of the entire student body in the colleges concerned becomes

accessible, in the sense that they will pay attention to what the Christian Union is saying, and will attend in large numbers any meetings that may be arranged. The things that seem to matter are that the members of the Christian Union should manifest a spirit of fellowship—disunion of any kind is fatal. If the spirit of fellowship is strong and leads to kindliness, generosity, public-spiritedness ; if there is a spirit of prayer in the Christian Union ; if there is an absence of censoriousness and priggishness ; if the Christian Union Committee has developed a faculty for self-criticism, and is helped thereby to be both humble and sane ; if there is a readiness to try and understand the points of view and difficulties of those who are not Christians, and a real readiness to help all sorts of people in a humble and friendly way ; if the members of the Christian Union do their college work well, take a whole-hearted interest in the athletic and social side of college life, showing real public-spiritedness, it will soon be said that the best people in college are the Christian Union people, and once that is said, there will be large numbers who will be ready to listen to anything the Christian Union has to say. It will then have the ear of the college."

Because of this we try to help the Christian Unions in any way we can and do not harp upon the need for evangelistic missions. We find that the desire to hold such arises naturally from time to time in all our universities. When it does not arise, it means that the spiritual life of the Christian

Union is of poor quality, and to try both to galvanize it and to reach the outsider at the same time by holding a mission is likely to do more harm than good. If a Christian Union is not really being evangelistic all the time, winning men by personal influence, and through discussion and study circles, it is not ready for the special effort of a mission and for following it up and conserving results.

It is important that there should be a rich and progressive thought life in the Christian Union.

"It is when the members of the Christian Union are facing big questions, are thinking about life in a big way, when they are refusing to take stereotyped views, when they are not afraid of new ideas, when the whole intellectual atmosphere is alive and vivid, that it is likely to be most effective as an evangelistic force. Where the Christian Union manifests this kind of life, it is producing people who get into touch with their fellow students, get to know them and their difficulties, and get opportunities to help them to become Christians.

"Hundreds and hundreds of students every year are led into the Christian life by their fellow students. This does not come about through the kind of personal work that is described in many books and pamphlets on the subject written by evangelists. There is not much button-holing of students by one another, but, let a man or woman, or a group of men and women, in a college come to have a strong faith in Christ, a real belief

in the Kingdom of God, and whatever their feelings may be, however many unsolved problems they may have, they will get somehow into touch with fellow students, who will talk with them about these great things, who will be led most probably to join a Bible study circle, who may possibly be brought to a summer conference, who, without being able to explain exactly how it has come about, will find themselves looking to Christ. Where this kind of thing is going on in a college, a series of three or four meetings on successive days, backed up by the whole Christian Union, is likely to be found very effective. Students, who, under the influence of the Christian Union, have been thinking about the claims of Christ, are led to decide to follow Him. It is valuable to give an opportunity for decision."

There are four chief difficulties with which we have to contend :—

1. Students have much to unlearn about Christianity. Crude ideas about God and about the Atonement, confused views about the Person of our Lord, also misunderstanding and ignorance of the Bible are stumbling blocks. The lack of careful religious teaching is apparent everywhere throughout the student class.

2. The rush and strain of life in all the modern universities, the training colleges, and medical schools. Students outside the older universities have little time to think and sheer fatigue robs many of the nervous strength needed, and tends to cause them to drift.

3. The Student Christian Movement is badly understaffed through lack of adequate financial support from the Christian public. A dozen more secretaries would enable countless lost opportunities to be taken, and as every secretary is in some measure an evangelist, and all are concerned with the cure of souls, an adequate staff would result in larger evangelistic results.

4. More senior men who can speak effectively to students are needed. Those who can do so are as a rule very busy men, and unable to accept more than a small proportion of the invitations they receive.

The Universities and Colleges of Great Britain present a wonderful field for Christian service. The Student Christian Movement finds opportunities offered wherever it turns, and its own organization only very partially adequate to meet them, and its spiritual reserves needing constant supplementing by those of more experienced Christians, but it continues to be on a rising tide and recognizes in this fact the care and guidance of God, and accordingly faces the future with high expectation.

CHAPTER X

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY

Rev. C. H. Irwin, D.D.

At seven o'clock on a May morning—May 9, 1799—about forty gentlemen, most of them ministers of the Gospel, are seen entering St Paul's Coffee House in St Paul's Churchyard, London. Most noteworthy amongst them is the celebrated Rowland Hill of Surrey Chapel There, too, is the Rev. David Bogue of Gosport, so well known for his *Essay on the Inspiration of the New Testament*, and there is one who has brought them all together—the Rev. George Burder of Coventry.

There Mr Burder stated his plan for the formation of a Society "to promote the dispersion of religious tracts, which should develop more fully than Mrs Hannah More had done in her excellent Cheap Repository Tracts, the evangelical doctrines of the Gospel." And then at their early breakfast these good men founded the Religious Tract Society. Early breakfasts—though in these degenerate days the hour has become eight instead of seven—are still a time-honoured custom of the Committee of the R.T.S.

Around its table busy city men and professional men meet every Tuesday morning to discuss the great work of the Society, and the mission field is frequently represented by visitors from Africa, India, China, Japan, the Pacific Islands, South America, and the Continent of Europe.

Tract No. 1 on the Society's catalogue was *An Address to Christians on the distribution of Religious Tracts* by the Rev. David Bogue. In this tract the advantages of the printed page, as a means of spreading the truth, are admirably set forth.

"Everyone," says the writer, "has not the talent of talking to others on subjects of religion. Some have a diffidence which they cannot overcome. But it is not so hard to take a tract and say 'My friend, read that and tell me what you think of it.' It is a cheap way of diffusing the knowledge of religion; it is not so likely to give offence as some other methods of doing good; it is more extensive in its use than any other method; and it forms an excellent accompanimment of other methods of doing good."

The writer then states some qualities which should be found in a good tract. It should contain pure truth—"nothing to recommend one denomination or to throw odium on another; but pure, good-natured Christianity, in which all the followers of the Lamb, who are looking for the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ unto Eternal Life, can unite with pleasure as in one great common cause." There should be some account of the way of salvation in every tract. It should be

plain. It should be striking. It should be entertaining. It should be full of ideas.

Such was the ideal tract as sketched by one of the early founders of the Society. The ideal may not have been reached in every tract, but it has been and is the aim of the Society to keep this ideal before those who write for it. It may, perhaps, be admitted that tract distribution is not always wisely done, but the Society is responsible not for distribution but for production.

The Society's Committee, however, soon found that to adapt itself to the spread of education, and to supply the need for religious literature, it must not confine itself to tracts alone. Indeed, the first rule of the Society, which was adopted at its foundation, states that its object shall be "the circulation of small religious *books and treatises* in foreign countries, as well as through the British Dominions. In 1814 it began its series of children's books. In 1825 it commenced the publication of books for older people.

Among its notable books have been *The Pilgrim's Progress* in 115 languages, Commentaries on the Scriptures, including in recent years *The Devotional Commentary*; *The Bible Handbook* by Dr Angus and Dr S. G. Green; *The Handbook to the Grammar of the Greek Testament*, *The Annotated Paragraph Bible*, *The Universal Bible Dictionary*, edited by Archdeacon Buckland, and *The Bypaths of Bible Knowledge*.

The Society has always believed in the value of "truth embodied in a tale" and has issued

many works of wholesome fiction, such as the well-known books for the boys by G. E. Sargent, Talbot Baines Reed, Major Gilson, and Claverdon Young. Miss Amy Le Feuvre's stories, *Probable Sons*, *Teddy's Button*, etc.; Hesba Stretton's *Jessica's First Prayer*; those fine Protestant stories, *Crushed yet Conquering* and *Dr Adrian* by Miss Alcock, *Christie's Old Organ* by Mrs Walton, and for older readers works by Ian Maclaren, S. R. Crockett, Silas Hocking, and Joseph Hocking.

Beside the tract and the book, the Society has used also in its work of evangelism magazines for young and old. The two oldest of these were the *Tract Magazine* and the *Child's Companion* now the *Children's Companion*, which were both commenced on January 1, 1824. The former is now continued under the name of *Light in the Home*.

In 1852 the Committee took another forward step. They resolved to issue a family journal which should contain "information on literary, scientific, and general subjects, written in an attractive style, and in a religious spirit." This magazine was called *The Leisure Hour*, which lasted for more than fifty years, and included among its writers some of the most famous men of its time in science, history, travel, biography, fiction, and social questions.

The *Sunday at Home* was first published by the Religious Tract Society in the year 1854 and is still continued. Its long roll of contributors contains the names of many eminent preachers

and other authors representing various sections of the Christian Church. The Society believes that the need for such a magazine is as great to-day as ever it was.

Perhaps the greatest enterprise ever shown by the Society was when in 1878 it established the *Boy's Own Paper*. The Committee have had the great satisfaction of knowing that not only has the *B.O.P.* supplanted much of the low-class literature, but that it has also won the hearts of thousands of boys and helped them in the paths of wisdom and goodness.

The success of the *Boy's Own Paper* encouraged the Committee to establish in the following year a companion magazine for girls, now known as *The Girl's Own Paper and Woman's Magazine*. It, too, like the *B.O.P.*, has enlisted many able writers and has also had the help of many eminent musical composers. The Committee are glad to think that through its pages the message of the Gospel has been brought home to many young lives.

Much of the publication work already referred to is distinctly missionary in its character. But in addition to this the Society takes an important part in the great work of foreign missions. On the Continent of Europe it maintains its own Depots in Madrid and Lisbon, sending forth from them, not only over Spain and Portugal, but also through South America, books and tracts in Spanish and Portuguese. It also has an Agency at Budapest which was kept open during the War, and was enabled to supply publications in various

languages to the combatants on both sides, to prisoners of war and to the wounded men in the hospitals. It assists, by grants of money, the Evangelical Tract and Book Societies in France, Belgium, Italy, Germany, Greece, Poland, and other European countries.

In Africa the Society has published work in about seventy African languages besides that of Madagascar. In Asia many Societies and Missions in India, China and Japan, receive help, which is chiefly devoted to producing Christian literature in native languages. The Society is doing its best to foster *original work by native Christians.*

Not only minor evangelistic literature is thus produced but volumes of from 50 to 1000 pages have also been issued in the form of Commentaries, Bible Dictionaries, Histories, Theological work and educational literature, in at least 276 languages.

The R.T.S. assists the Missionary Societies of all the Churches. The present writer in twenty-seven years at its Committee Table has never known an application for help from any Society to be rejected so long as the funds of the Religious Tract Society permitted.

The Society has done much for Home Evangelization, not only by the books it has produced, but by the grants of them which it has made, either free or at reduced prices. In this way it has supplied books to the Sunday-school libraries of all denominations, to hospitals and asylums, homes and prisons, and other institutions. It

has assisted students for the ministry and ministers who could not afford to buy books. It has provided parcels for emigrants, for lighthouse keepers and fishermen. It has always had a special care for soldiers and sailors, and during the great war provided not only tracts and magazines, but books for the men in our army and navy at a cost of over £11,000.

Keeping ever in mind the importance of influencing the minds of the young it has since 1876 granted prizes for Scripture knowledge to pupils in Public Elementary Schools. The total number of prizes awarded in 1922 was 6177, and more than 450,000 scholars are examined each year in the schools of London and other centres on a carefully prepared syllabus of Scripture teaching.

Does tract distribution do any good? The most effective answer to this question is found year by year in the Annual Report of the Religious Tract Society. There are some noteworthy examples of men who have been much used by God who owed their conversion or their first spiritual awakening to the reading of a tract. Among those of recent years may be mentioned the late Rev. Prebendary Webb Peploe, Canon E. A. Stuart of Canterbury, and Mr Hudson Taylor of the China Inland Mission. From all kinds of evangelistic agencies in England, Scotland, and Ireland, from workers on the Continent and in the foreign mission fields, come continual testimonies to the value of the tract as well as the book. Sometimes the tract leads to the study of the

Bible, hitherto an unknown or neglected book, and in many cases is itself a direct agent in producing spiritual change.

A missionary of the London City Mission wrote last year: "The tracts are a great help in visitation. They serve as an introduction, furnish topics for conversation and remain as a witness in the home. Not long since, I distributed copies of a tract entitled *Why not now?* A young woman was helped by its message, and passed it on to a business acquaintance, who in turn handed it to his fiancée. The couple had not attended public worship for a long time, and the tract made them think. To-day, both are attached to a Church and are making headway spiritually. In due course the young man passed on the tract to his mother. She read it, told her husband of its contents and was brought definitely to know Christ as Saviour and Lord." Another city missionary was giving away tracts in the streets, and invited people to a Gospel service. That evening a gentleman, a stranger, spoke to the missionary at the close of the meeting, "Twenty years ago," he said, "you gave me a tract entitled *Kept by the Power of God.* It was the means of my salvation. My daughter was out this afternoon and received a tract bearing your name and an invitation to the meeting. I was glad of the discovery for I longed to tell you face to face what great things God had done for me. I have kept that tract these twenty years, and would on no account part with it."

"That tract has made a man of me" said a young man to a city missionary at Hull, who had given him and two of his friends a tract called *His Mother's Hymn* which led them all to decide for Christ. Another Hull city missionary handed a woman a tract with the unusual title *How do you like the fish?* He afterwards learned that in great distress, previous to his meeting her, she had determined to kill her two children and commit suicide. The tract led her to Christ and reconciled her to her husband, and, adds the city missionary, the home is now a little heaven.

"We are again and again struck," writes the Secretary of the Colportage Committee of the Belgian Missionary Church, "by the importance of the distribution of tracts in order to prepare the way for the Gospel." In a strongly Roman Catholic village in the Ardennes many peasants, after reading the tract entitled *Heureux ceux qui pleurent* (Blessed are they that mourn) begged to buy the New Testament that they had refused before. A pastor in the south of France tells of a family living nine kilometres away from his church who have come to see him as a result of tract distribution, and promised to come as often as possible on Sundays to the service. The colporteurs of the Geneva Society, who labour chiefly in France, find that the tract and booklet constantly lead to a demand for the Scriptures, awaken the conscience and bring comfort and peace to troubled hearts. Last year they sold

about 200,000 tracts, which the Religious Tract Society assisted in providing.

In 1922 Don. Lorenzo Perosi, the Director of Music in the Sixtine Chapel at Rome and author of numerous and beautiful oratorios, left the Church of Rome on account of its errors. He was much influenced in taking this step by the Commentaries of Professor Bosio which have been issued in Italian with the help of the R.T.S. by the Italian Evangelical Publication Society of Florence.

A missionary in Brazil, referring to the help he had received in his work from the Portuguese books of the R.T.S., says " we elected as a Deacon yesterday a man who was converted by reading *Julião e a Biblia*" (Julian and the Bible). This is a story translated from the Spanish, in which language it has been blessed to many.

" El hombre de los libritos " (The man of the little books) is a name given to a Spanish Evangelist in Linares who always goes well provided with tracts on his railway journeys. A gentleman at the other end of a carriage in which he was recently travelling came over beside him and said " I want to go with one that can teach me something. You gave me some time ago a book which did me good, and I wish to learn of the things of God."

In India the preacher has to pass on from village to village, but is confident that his message is more likely to be remembered and to spread beyond those to whom he has actually spoken if he can leave some books and tracts behind him.

In a village in South India where the people had bought several Gospels and tracts for their children, a Brahmin ordered all the Christian books in the village to be brought to him. Making a pile he set fire to them and burned them before them all. He then strictly enjoined both the boys and their parents not even to touch Christian books again. When six months after the preacher went to the village, the people told him that though the Brahmin could burn the books, he could not stamp out the truth that was in their hearts.

In China there are several cases where Christian Churches have been founded as a direct result of tract-reading alone, in places where no missionary except the printed page had ever come.

So at home and abroad the work of tract distribution and the production of Christian books is carried on to-day over a wider area than ever before, and with ever-increasing encouragement. If the financial resources at the disposal of the Religious Tract Society were made more adequate by the generosity and intelligence of the Christian public, with a clearer appreciation of the importance of literature in evangelism, the Society with the machinery at its command all over the world could do much more than it is at present able to do to meet the call of the mission field.

It is difficult to tabulate results, nor indeed is it always wise to attempt it. But God's word shall not return unto Him void.

Waste there may sometimes appear to be.

Tennyson in his *In Memoriam* speaking of Nature says :—

> "And finding that of fifty seeds
> She often brings but one to bear."

But the Parable of the Sower is the answer to the faith that falters before apparent want of success. There are the cases where no impression at all is made ; the disappointment of unfulfilled promise on the rocky ground ; the baffling hostility of the world with all its choking thorns, materialism and pleasure. But the hundred or the sixty-fold of the reaping time will more than compensate for them all.

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